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CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

A POEM,

IN EIGHT BOOKS.

BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

EIGHTH EDITION.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LACKINGTON, ALLEN, AND CO.

TEMPLE OF THE MUSES,

FINSBURY-SQUARE.

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CALVARY;

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THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK I.

ARGUMENT.

After a short introduction, which states the miraculous acts of CHRIST, and serves to mark the period at which the Poem commences, SATAN goes forth by night into the wilderness, and finds himself in the very spot, where he had in vain practised his temptations upon CHRIST:.... Here he falls into meditation upon that unsuccessful interview, and vents himself in soliloquy:....Indignant under disappointment and impatient to repair his defeat, he ascends to the summit of the mountain, from whence he had exhibited the kingdoms of the earth, and calls the Devils from all parts of the Heathen world:....The whole host of Infernals assemble at his summons:....The chief leaders are enumerated, their persons and attributes described:....SATAN addresses them, and proposes the subject matter for their consultation, namely, By what means to counteract the power of CHRIST upon earth:....BAAL delivers his sentiments by stating difficulties and objections without any decided opinion unless for seduction in the general:....MOLOCH angrily resents what he considers as pointed at himself, and speaks disdainfully against the proposal of seduction, as not only desperate but disgraceful:....BELIAL replies, and after much circumlocution suggests a temptation to be set on foot by MAMMON:....He is interrupted by SATAN, who reproves him for certain digressions in his speech, but adopts his hint of employing MAMMON, and calls upon that evil spirit to attempt the fidelity of JUDAS ISCARIOT, whom he points out to him as the only one of the Disciples open to seduction:....MAMMON at first affects to excuse himself from the undertaking, but in conclusion accepts it, and taking wing in presence of the whole applauding host sets out upon his embassy, directing his course to the City of Jerusalem.

CALVARY.

BOOK I.

THE ASSEMBLING OF THE DEVILS.

HAIL, awful CALVARY! forsaking now
Aönian haunts and the unhallow'd Nine,
I visit thy sad mount, and thence invite
The mournful echoes to my deep-ton'd harp,
Hymning the whilst in solemn numbers praise
To God for mercies purchas'd by the death
Of that mysterious Being, virgin-born,
Savior of lost mankind, who on the cross,
Lord though he be of life and one with God,
In mortal pangs expir'd; there to atone
For a degenerate world, by his pure blood
To wash original corruption out,

And rising victor from the grave dispel
Sin and it's offspring Death, with all the train
Of idol gods, usurping earth and heav'n.
Now had the wond'rous acts by Jesus wrought
Spread wide his fame thro' all Judæa's realm;
The leper cleans'd, the blind to sight restor'd,
The sick to health and ev'n the dead to life,
Tho' warn'd to silence, for his modest ear
Sought not the praise of men, so much the more
Publish'd his mercies; Dæmons at his call
With horrid shrieks, that testified his power,
Came forth from men possest and fled; his voice
Rebuk'd the seas and winds; vast was the throng
That follow'd where he led, and thousands found
In the waste wilderness mirac'lous food:
They saw, they marvel'd, and of force confest
Messias in his power, not so in form;
For there no comeliness, no outward grace,
No princely state appear'd: Slow to renounce
Illusions

Illusions long indulg'd, their wavering minds
'Twixt two opinions halted, while in place
Of these bright visions they beheld a man
Lowly and meek, a houseless wanderer,
That had not where on earth to lay his head:—
Such can our Israel's great Restorer be,
Such our Messias?—Thus their troubled thoughts
Like meeting currents clash'd; when as he spake
Truth flow'd resistless from his lips, his eyes
Beam'd mercy, and his Father's glory shone
Effulgent in his face; then every tongue
Was hush'd to silence, every doubt dispell'd,
And every heart confess'd him Lord and Christ.
'Twas night, when SATAN, prince of darkness call'd,
And fitly call'd, for evil hates the day,
Walk'd forth on hellish meditation bent,
Prowling the wilderness: Where'er he trode,
Earth quak'd beneath his foot; before him roll'd
Thick cloud and vapour, making night's dark shade

More black and terrible; the beasts of prey,
Every wild thing that roams the savage waste
And howling to the moon demands it's food,
Fled his approach; the lion and the pard
Scented the blast and slunk into their dens;
For whilst his breast with raging passions boil'd,
Hatred, revenge and blasphemous despight,
The sighs he vented from the hell within
Breath'd death into the air; his haggard eyes,
Which still in speechless agonies he roll'd,
Out-glar'd the hyæna's; other fires than their's
To light his dismal path he needed none.

Now, having stretch'd athwart the sandy wild
Clear to its rocky verge, the Arch-fiend paus'd
And upward cast his eye, if haply there
Darkling he might discern what saucy mound
Dar'd to arrest his course; for yet there dwelt
Such vigor in his wing, nor depth, nor height,
Mountains nor seas might check his bold career,

Were

Were he so purpos'd; neither would he deign
To ask one charitable star for light,
Thoughtful of former glory, when he soar'd
Son of the morning far above their spheres.
Whereat he 'gan put forth his plumed vans
From either shoulder stretcht for flight, when soon
The fuel'd clouds to fierce encounter rush'd,
Loud thunders bellow'd, and the lightning's flash
Smote on the craggy cliff; at sight whereof
Conscious that now he press'd the fatal spot,
Where late he commun'd with the Son of God,
Who for the space of forty days and nights
Foil'd ev'ry vain device, with shame abash'd
And pondering in his mind his foul defeat,
Down, down at once his flagging pinions fell
Close cow'ring to his ribs: As some proud ship
Between the tropics o'er th' Atlantic wave
Speeding amain to reach her destin'd port,
If chance th' experienc'd mariner espies

The gathering hurricane, no stay, no stop,
Quick to the yard each swelling sail is furl'd,
The curl'd waves whitening as the torrent drives,
And soon her taunt and lofty topmast lower'd
Strikes to the gale; so he his towering height,
That to angelic stature now had swell'd,
Shrunk into human size, nor other seem'd
Than pilgrim squalid and with years and toil
Bending decrepit, when from his full heart
Words intermixt with groans thus forc'd their way.
Yes, hateful wilderness, detested rocks,
Whom I would curse, had Nature left one blade
On your bare ribs, which cursing I might blast,
Full well I know you; deep, too deep engrav'd
On memory's tablet your rude horrors live.
And you, officious lightnings, hide your fires!
Come, Night, again; let central darkness shrowd
Scenes, whose tormenting recollection stabs
My unavenged soul. Can I forget

This

This Son of Joseph? Son of God henceforth
Of force I must confess him, for what less
Than god-like constancy could have withstood
Temptations great and terrible as mine?
Something which man is not, he needs must be,
Virtue, that angels boast not, he must have,
Else had my snares enclos'd him, else the world,
Which then was mine to give, had been a bribe
Too glorious not to dazzle every eye
But his, who made those glories what they are.
Still I must doubt the Father's love sincere,
Tho' loudly vouch'd by his own voice from heav'n:
Is this a father's love, is this his care,
Here to expose him to this desert wild
Forty long sleepless nights and fasting days,
No Angel guard about him, lost, forlorn,
Abandon'd to the elements, to beasts
More fierce than this loud storm; nay, fiercer still,
To me than all more terrible, to me,

Foe of his life inveterate and avow'd?
Rare sample of God's love! If here his CHRIST
Encounter'd aught of danger; and if none,
What else could prompt him to this vain display
Of voluntary penance, but the love
Of flattery and a despicable wish
To hear himself applauded? In this spot,
Beneath the jutting roof of this rude cliff,
I first surpriz'd this wand'ring Son of God,
This Savior of the world: Fainting he seem'd
With thirst and hunger, pale as death his cheek,
His hollow eyes deep sunk, and from his brow
Big drops of sweat distill'd, as one o'erspent
And sinking to the earth there to expire:
A ready tale he had for pity's ear,
A melancholy list of wants and woes;
He had not tasted food, and fairly own'd
That nature's cravings were intense; when I,
Glad at the heart to find him thus besieg'd

With

With appetite so eager, stooping down,
From the dissever'd fragments, that here lie
About the base of this storm-beaten rock,
Chose out a few smooth stones, and tempting said,
If thou art hungry, eat; convert these stones,
If thou art God's own Son, to bread, and eat!
But he not so beguil'd spurn'd them away,
And silenc'd me with text of holy writ:
A nobler appetite I next assail'd,
Ambition; to the mountain's top we soar'd;
I spread the kingdoms of the earth in sight,
Fit sight to wet the hunger of the mind;
But mind and body he alike would starve,
Nor thank nor homage render back for food
Of my providing: One last hope remain'd;
Methought there was a godly pride about him,
Which with right holy flattery I might win:
Upon the temple's topmost pinnacle
I plac'd this scorner of an earthly crown,

And bade him be a God; Cast thyself down;
Behold, quoth I, the Angels are on wing
To bear thee up unhurt: With stern rebuke,
Get thee behind me, SATAN! he replied:
Some power unseen controll'd me, down I fell,
Down from the giddy eminence I plung'd,
And left him to his Angels, whilst their hymns
And hallelujahs echo'd through the air
His triumphs and my second fall from heav'n.
And now if dark despair shall reach this heart,
Which of hell's tetrarchs can arraign their king,
Or fix on me his share of public loss
And overthrow sustain'd in this attack?
None, for none dare. If I, till now supreme,
Great idol of the Gentile world, for whom
So many groves, so many altars blaze;
If I, to whom by various names ador'd
Thousands of temples rise, whilst one alone,
One solitary pile on Sion's hill

Echoes

Echoes the praise of God, neglected else
Of all; if I, if SATAN must submit
To CHRIST, revenge to patience, war to peace,
And men must learn new maxims of forgiveness,
Maxims I neither practise nor instil,
Heroes and kings and conquerors, farewell!
Greater is he who serves than he who reigns:
To suffer, to submit, to turn the cheek
To the proud smiter, these are virtues now;
Hence with such virtues! If these rules obtain,
If this tame doctrine shall unman the world,
Altars and groves and temples all must sink;
Olympus and its synod, every grace
And every muse, all that the chissel wrought
In Greece or Rome, shall moulder into dust,
And CHRIST and Reason shall usurp the world.
He ceas'd, and now his swelling bosom heav'd
With indignation like the labouring earth,
Which subterranean vapours undermine,

Pent in it's sulph'rous entrails: Up he sprung
To that high mountain top whence he review'd
The kingdoms of the earth, whilst at his side
CHRIST's humble virtue stood, on other realms,
Realms of immortal happiness, intent:
Here, as a vulture, on the craggy peak
Of Caucasus or Hæmus left to watch,
Screams out his shrill alarm, at sound whereof
The carrion troop, upon the wing for prey,
Come flocking to the signal, SATAN thus
Stood eminent, and call'd his dark compeers;
So loud he call'd that to the farthest bounds
Of Pagan isle or continent was heard
His voice re-echoing thro' the vault of heav'n.
Heroes and demi-gods, Olympian powers,
Infernal princes of hell's dark abyss,
Heaven's exiles, spirits of air, water, fire,
Or whatsoever element confines
Your incorporeal essences, Oh hear!

Hear

Hear and assemble ! 'tis your leader calls ;
It is your champion's voice, in happier hours
Heard and obey'd, now in extremest need
Be present and assist our great divan.
No more, for soon was heard the distant sound
Of wings that beat the air ; from every point
Of the four winds the gathering swarm came on ;
From Crete, from Cyprus and the Ionian coast,
From Egypt, Afric, and the Ausonian shores,
Gods of all names, dimensions and degrees.
Great was their sov'reign's triumph to behold
This prompt obedience to his high command ;
For now descending on the desert heath
To martial music, the infernal host
In bands and columns, by their chiefs arrang'd,
Stood firm ; if ever gleam of joy might reach
Heart so accurs'd, th' Arch-fiend had felt it here,
As with a monarch's eye he now review'd
His armies, covering all the swarthy plain.

Come,

Come, Muse, and to your suppliant's eyes impart
One ray of that pure light, which late you pour'd
On the dark orbs of your immortal Bard
Eclips'd by drop-serene : Conduct me now,
Me from my better days of bold emprise
Far in decline, and with the hoary hand
Of Time hard stricken, yet adventuring forth
O'er Nature's limits into worlds unseen,
Peopled with shadowy forms and phantoms dire :
Oh! bear me on your pinions in this void,
Where weary foot ne'er rested; and behold!
All hell bursts forth : Support me, or I sink.
Now glimm'ring twilight streak'd the Eastern sky,
For he, that on his forehead brings the morn,
Star-crowned PHOSPHORUS had heard the call,
And with the foremost stood. Beside him one
Of towering stature and majestic port,
Himself a host; his black and curling locks
Down his herculean shoulders copious flow'd;

In

In glittering brass upon his shield he bore
A kingly eagle, ensign of command,
BAAL his name, second to none in state
Save only his great chieftain ; worshipp'd long
In Babylon, till Daniel drove him thence
With all his gluttonous priests ; exalted since
High above all the idol gods of Greece,
Thron'd on Olympus, and his impious hand
Arm'd with the thunder ; yet he ru'd the zeal
Of furious Jehu, and that mournful day,
When he beheld his altars stream with blood,
His prophets and his priests by hundreds slain
Upon Mount Carmel. MOLOCH in the van,
Mail'd at all points for war, with spear and helm
And plumed crest and garments roll'd in blood,
Flam'd like a meteor : Him with horrid joy
SATAN awhile survey'd, then sighing cried,
Oh ! worthy of command, had all like thee
So bravely fought, heav'n never had been lost.

Thence

Thence as he glanc'd his eye, far other form
And much unfit for war he next espied,
Chemos, the son of Moab; power obscene,
Emasculate and soft, in loose attire
A sensual deity; his glory 'twas
In arts of base seduction to excel,
And leagu'd with harlots to have turn'd the heart
Of that wise king, and drawn him from his God
To bend his aged knees at idol shrines.
Close at his side stood one, in whose soft eyes
Ensnaring smiles and beauteous ruin lurk'd;
Oh! that such grace should be allied to sin;
Zidonian goddess, Ashtoreth her name;
Heav'n would not quite destroy so fair a work,
But wantonness usurp'd an angel face,
And with her innocence had chang'd her sex:
Yet let that sex beware, for in their souls,
When once she enters, peace no longer dwells;
Witness that Magdalen, whose frantic breast,

Till

Till by CHRIST's mercy heal'd, sev'n dæmons rent,
All sin-begotten, all her brood accurst.
But SATAN, whose stern heart, stranger to love,
All weakness tho' in shape of sin disdain'd,
And only priz'd spirits more like himself,
Indignant turn'd aside, and bent his eye
Where DAGON, giant god, amidst the ranks,
Like Teneriff or Ætna, proudly tower'd:
DAGON of Gath and Askalon the boast
In that sad flight, when on Gilboa's mount
The shield of Saul was vilely thrown away,
And Israel's beauty perish'd: Him awhile
With scowling eye the infernal king survey'd,
Then taunting cried, O DAGON, vast in size,
In soul diminutive, had that huge mass
Valour proportionate, heav'n had been our's;
But fitter thou, dull spirit, to people hell
Than re-assault God's throne: Where was thy pride,
When overthrown in Gaza by the strength

Of that uxorious Danite? Humbled now
I know thy nightly haunts, and how thou driv'st
Wretches possest to hide themselves in tombs,
Whence I beheld thee 'midst the herd unclean
Scour down the steep and plunge into the sea.
But now a fairer form arrests the eye
Of hell's despotic lord; his radiant vest
Of Tyrian purple, studded thick with gems,
Flow'd graceful: He for courts was form'd, for feasts,
For ladies' chambers and for amorous sports;
He lov'd not camps nor the rude toils of war;
BELIAL his name; around his temples twin'd
A wreath of roses, and, where'er he pass'd,
His garments fann'd a breeze of rich perfume:
No ear had he for the shrill-toned trump,
Him the soft warble of the Lydian flute
Delighted rather, the love-soothing harp,
Sappho's loose song and the Aonian Maids
And zoneless Graces floating in the dance;

Yet

Yet from his lips sweet eloquence distill'd,
As honey from the bee, but still his voice
Ne'er counsell'd aught but cunning and deceit,
Mean truce and base capitulating terms;
Therefore by SATAN held in slight account,
For devils affect a dignity in sin.
Last in the field, and from the rest apart,
Was MAMMON; cautious was his step and slow,
His eye still watchful to prevent surprize,
Squalid his vesture and his locks uncomb'd;
For gain and usury engross'd his soul,
Nor other care had he but to amass
Wealth unenjoy'd, and gloat upon his hoard:
Had there been only happiness in heav'n
And gold in hell, MAMMON had spurn'd the bliss,
And hugg'd the treasure cheaply earn'd with pain.
His princes thus review'd, from the hill top
SATAN swift-glancing flew, and in the midst
Rose like a meteor; whereat all the host

Sent up a general shout: he with his hand
Gave sign, and wheel'd the Stygian phalanx round,
Horrible sight! A theatre of fiends,
And each the foe of man; idols and imps,
Wizzards, familiars, sprites, phantasmas, dreams,
Sorrows and pains and deaths in every shape
Cover'd the blasted heath: Th' infernal king,
Tho' in his heart, by mutinous passions torn,
Thought clash'd with thought, and all was anarchy,
Yet with assum'd composure beck'ning forth
His princes, whilst th' inferior throng stood off,
And mute attention reign'd, in few thus spake:
Friends and confederates, welcome! for this proof
Of your affiance, thanks! On every call,
Whether we need your counsel or your arms,
Joyful I see your ready zeal displays
Virtues, which hell itself cannot corrupt.
I mean not to declaim: The occasion told
Speaks its own import, and the time's dispatch

All

All waste of words forbids. God's Son on earth,
CHRIST, the reveal'd Messias, how to oppose
Is now the question; by what force, or power—
Temptations have been tried, I name not them—
Or dark conspiracy, we may pull down
This sun of righteousness from his bright sphere
Declare, who can: I pause for a reply.

Silence ensu'd, whilst every eye was turn'd
Instinctively on BAAL; he of all
Hell's magi fill'd the seat of wisdom chief:
Experienc'd long in craft, and nothing apt
To give strait counsel, slow of speech he was:
To hint, propound, dilate, and so entice
Other opinions forth, them to refute,
And thereon build his own, was all his art.
After long pause and hesitation feign'd,
Stale trick of orators, he thus began:

Why thus on me, as I were worthy, me,
Lost being like yourselves, as I alone
Cou'd

Could compass this high argument, on me,
Least in your sapient conclave, why you point
These scrutinizing looks, I muse; and aw'd
By this your expectation fain wou'd shrink
From the great task to silence, had you not
O'er these poor faculties such full controul,
As to put by all pleas, and call them forth
In heav'n or earth, or hell's profound abyss,
Your's in all uses, present at all hours.
Our kingly chief hath told us we are met
To combat CHRIST on earth: Be't so! We yet
May try our fortune in another field;
Worse fortune than in heav'n befell our arms,
Worse downfall than to hell, we cannot prove.
But with the scene our action too must change:
How? to what warfare? Circumvention, fraud,
Seduction; these are earthly weapons, these
As man to man opposes, so must we
To CHRIST incarnate. There be some, who cry,

Hence

Hence with such dastard arts! War, open war!
I honor such bold counsellors, and yield
All that I can, my praise; till one be found,
One that may rival God's own Son in power,
And miracle to miracle oppose,
More than my praise I cannot, my assent
I will not give; 'twere madness: And how war
With God? what arms may we employ 'gainst him,
Whose very prophets can call down heaven's fires
Upon our priests and altars? For myself,
What powers I had I shall not soon forget;
What I have left I know, and for your use
Shall husband as I may, not vainly risque
Where they must surely fail. The Jews pretend
That CHRIST colludes with Belzebub; the Jews
As far mistake my nature as my name:
The fallacy, O peers, confutes itself,
Forg'd to disparage CHRIST, not honor me:
Oh! that I had his wonder-working powers;

I'm

I'm not that fool to turn them on myself:
No, my brave friends, I've yet too much to lose;
Though Babylon's proud shrines are laid in dust,
Rome's capitol survives, and thro' the world
Where'er her eagles fly, upon their wings
They bear my thunder and they spread my fame:
Therefore no more of Belzebub and CHRIST;
No league, no compact can we hold together.
What then ensues? Despair? Perish the thought!
The brave renounce it, and the wise prevent;
You are both wise and brave. Our leader says
Temptations have been tried, and tried in vain,
Himself the tempter. Who will tread that ground,
Where he was foil'd? For Adam a mere toy,
An apple serv'd; CHRIST is not brib'd by worlds:
So much the second Man exceeds the first
In strength and glory. But tho' CHRIST himself
Will not be tempted, those who hear him may:
Jews may be urg'd to envy, to revenge,

To

To murder; a rebellious race of old,
To kill a prophet or betray his God
What Jew was ever found to need the spur?
Wist ye not what a train this preacher hath,
What followers, what disciples? These are men,
Mere men, frail sons of Adam, born in sin.
Here is our hope. I leave it to your thoughts.
He ceas'd, but neither murmur nor applause
Follow'd his speech, for MOLOCH, whose fell heart
Ill stomach'd this tame counsel, least of all
Taunts thinly cover'd under mask of praise,
Sprung forth impetuous, and with scowling brow
And accent acrimonious thus replied:
My thoughts it seems are known before I speak:
War, open war is all my note: I rise
To thank the prophet, who thus reads my heart,
Where honesty shou'd wear it, in my face;
That face from danger I did never hide,
How then from him? Nor am I by his praise

More honor'd than by his dissenting voice:
For whilst he counsels circumvention, fraud,
Seduction,—if my memory wrongs his words
I yield it to correction,—we stand off
Wide as the poles apart. Much I had hop'd
When the great Tempter fail'd and in your ears
Sung his own honor's dirge, we had heard the last
Of plots and mean temptations; mean I call them,
For great names cannot sanctify mean deeds:
SATAN himself knows I oppos'd the attempt,
Appeal'd, protested; my thrice-honor'd chief
Knows it full well and blushes for th' event.
And are we now caballing how to outwit
A few poor harmless fishermen, for such
Are CHRIST's disciples; how to gull and cheat
Their simple hearts of honesty? Oh peers,
For shame, if not for pity, leave them that,
That beggar's virtue: And is this the theme,
The mighty theme, which now employs the thoughts

Of

Of your immortal synod? Shame, oh shame!
Princes, Dominions, Arch-angelic Thrones,
Imperial Lords! these were your titles once,
By these names ye were known above the stars,
Shame not your antient dignities, nor sink
Beneath the vilest of the sons of men,
Whisperers, informers, spies. If CHRIST be God,
Fight, as becometh you to fight, with God:
If man, and sure his birth bespeaks no more,
Why all this preparation, this consult,
These mighty machinations and cabals?
Off with your foe at once, dismiss him hence
Where all his brother prophets have been sent;
Where his precursor John is gone before,
Whose voice still echoes thro' this wilderness:—
"Repent ye, for God's kingdom is at hand!
"Prepare ye the Lord's way!"—It is prepar'd;
It leads to death, it marshals him the road
To that oblivious bourne, whence none return:

Herod

Herod yet lives; another royal feast,
Another wanton dance, and he, for whom
So many innocents were slain, shall fall.
Once vanquish'd, are we therefore to despair?
In heav'n unequal battle we provok'd;
Tho' vast our host, the million was with God:
On earth enquire of all the nations round
Whom they will serve, with one voice they reply,
We are their gods; they feed us with their blood,
Their sons and daughters they make pass thro' fire
To do us grace; if their own flesh they give,
Shall they with-hold to sacrifice a foe?
Twelve tribes were all JEHOVAH had on earth,
And ten are lost; of this small remnant few
And wretched are the friends that league with Heav'n.
And where is now CHRIST's promis'd reign on earth?
When God's own servants rise against his Son,
And those, to whom the promises were giv'n,
Revolt from their Messias, can we wish

Greater

Greater revenge? What need have we to tempt
Them, who have hearts rebellious as our own,
As prompt to malice, no less prone to vex
God's righteous spirit? And let come what may,
It comes not to our loss, rather our gain.
Let God arise to vengeance; let him pour
Destruction on his temple, whose proud height
Our chief can witness, measur'd by his fall:
Let him not leave one stone upon another,
As his rash Son hath menac'd; let his wrath
Thro' all the inhospitable earth disperse
His scatter'd tribes; such ever be the fate
Of all his worshippers! May scorn, contempt,
Derision be their lot, and may their God
Never recall his curse! Are we, O peers,
To mourn for his Jerusalem? Our joy
Springs from confusion; enmity 'twixt God
And man is our best triumph: For myself,
War is my harvest, then my altars blaze
Brightest,

Brightest, when human victims feed the flame.
Breathless he paus'd, so rapid was the pulse
Of his high-beating heart he stood as one
Choak'd and convuls'd with rage; when as he ceas'd,
He smote his mailed habergeon so loud,
Hell's armed legions heard, and shook their spears
Betok'ning war: Frowning he look'd around,
Whilst from his fiery eyes such terror glanc'd,
It seem'd as if his pride meant to abash
And silence all opposers: Yet not long
His triumph, for now BELIAL from the ranks
Graceful advanc'd, and as he put aside
His purple robe in act to speak, the throng,
Such was the dazzling beauty of his form,
Fell back a space; then stood all eyes and ears
In expectation mute as death: Though hell
Own'd not a spirit more false, sensual and base,
Yet ever as he spake such action grac'd
His words, so musically soft they flow'd,

Who

Who most despis'd the pleader prais'd the speech:
When thus with mild insinuating looks,
Masking his rancorous heart, the Fiend began.
After so many peaceful ages past
Since first emerging from hell's dark abyss,
Rous'd by our Arch-angelic Chief we sprung
Up to this middle region, and here seiz'd
On this terrestrial globe, created first
For man, our vassal now, where at full ease,
Lords of the elements and gods ador'd,
We reign and revel undisturb'd of Heav'n,
If God, whose jealousy be sure ill brooks
Of us his exil'd angels, and his name
Pent up in Palestine, should now arouse
His slumb'ring wrath, and his best strength put forth
To wrestle for lost empire, and our earth,
As we in evil hour his heav'n, assail,
Who of this mighty synod but must own

The provocation warrants the retort?
If then the Maker of mankind hath cause
To meditate their rescue, we no less
Have cause to oppose th' attempt, and hold them fast
To their allegiance in despite of Heav'n.
Much we owe to our great Leader's care,
Which, ever watchful o'er the public weal,
Calls us to this full council, here to meet
In grave consult how best we may repair
Past disappointments, and repel the spite
Of this new Champion, levell'd at our shrines.
Great is the trouble of my thoughts, O peers,
And much perplex'd am I with doubts, what name,
Nature and office to ascribe to CHRIST;
In form the lowliest of the sons of men,
In miracles omnipotent as God;
Whose voice controuls the stoutest of our host,
Bids the graves open and their dead come forth;
Whose very touch is health; who with a glance
Pervades

Pervades each heart, absolves it or condemns;
Whose virgin birth credulity scarce owns,
And nature disavows. Prais'd to all time,
Immortal as himself be the renown
Of that wise spirit, who shall devise the means
By force or fraud to overthrow the power
Of this mysterious foe, what shall I say?—
Priest, Prophet, King, Messias, Son of God.
Yet how God's unity, which well we know
Endures no second, should adopt a Son
And essence indivisible divide,
Baffles my weak conjecture: Let that pass!
To such hard doctrines I subscribe no faith:
I'll call him man inspir'd, and wait till death
Gives sentence of mortality upon him.
Meanwhile let circumspection on our part
Fill all the anxious interim; alarm
Rome's jealousy, stir up the captious spleen
Of the proud Pharisee, beset him round

With snares to catch him, urge the envious priests,
For envy still beneath the altar lurks,
And note the man he trusts. MAMMON could tell,
Though MAMMON boasts not of his own success,
How few of human mould have yet withstood
His glittering, golden lures. The sword can kill
Man's body, gold destroys his very soul:
Yet mark me well, I counsel not to tempt
The Master; poverty can do no more
Than his own mortifying penance does,
Hunger and thirst and obstinately starve,
When his mere wish could make the rock a spring
And its hard fragments bread: Yet sure I am
All are not CHRIST'S in heart, who with their lips
Confess him; these are men, and therefore frail,
Frail and corruptible: And let none say,
Fear prompts this counsel; I disclaim all fear
But for the general cause: In every heart
Nature hath built my altar; every sect,

Nation

Nation and language, with one voice confess
Pleasure the sovereign good: The Stoic churl,
The dogged Cynic snarling in his tub,
And all the ragged moralizing crew
Are hypocrites; philosophy itself
Is but my votary beneath a cloak:
It harms not me, though every idol god
Were tumbled from his base; alike I scorn
Sampson's strong nerve and Daniel's flaming zeal:
And let CHRIST preach his mortifying rules,
Let him go forth through all the Gentile world,
And on the ruin of our fanes erect
His church triumphant o'er the gates of hell,
Still, still man's heart will draw the secret sigh
For pleasures unenjoy'd; the gloomy cell
And melancholy fast, the midnight prayer
And pale contrition weeping o'er her lamp
Are penances, from which the sense revolts:
Fines, that compounding superstition pays

For pleasures past, or bribes for more to come.
Enough of this vain boast, here SATAN cried;
More than enough of these voluptuous strains,
Which, tho' they lull the ear, disarm the soul
Of its best attribute: Not gaudy flowers
Are cull'd for med'cine, but the humble weed;
True wisdom, ever frugal of her speech,
Gives sage advice in plain and homely words.
The sum of all our reasoning ends in this,
That nothing but the death of CHRIST can solve
The mystery of his nature; till he falls
Scarce can I say we stand: All voices then,
Though varying in the means, conspire his death;
Some cautiously as BAAL; some with zeal
Precipitate as MOLOCH, whose swift thought
Vaults over all impediments to seize
The goal of his ambition. But, O peers,
Our's is no trivial care; direct your sight
Along the ranks of that redeemed host;

On

On us hangs all their safety : Night and day
My anxious thoughts are labouring in their cause,
And whilst CHRIST walks the earth I take no rest,
A watchful spy for ever at his side,
Noting each word and deed; sometimes I mix
With the selected Twelve that page his steps;
Of these, though some have waver'd, none is false
Save one alone, ISCARIOT he by name;
The taint of avarice hath touch'd his heart;
I've mark'd him for my own. Hear, princes, hear!
This night the priests and elders will convene
Their secret conclave: I am in their hearts;
Burning with envy, malice and revenge,
Their only thought is how to tangle CHRIST,
In whom of force I own no guile is found,
But gentleness instead and perfect truth,
A lamb in nature without spot and pure,
Fit victim therefore for their Paschal rites,
Which now are near at hand; apt is the hour,

Apt

Apt are the instruments. What now remains
But to send forth a tempter to persuade
Iscariot to betray his Master's life,
And damn himself for gold? Speak, is there one,
One in this patriot circle, whom all eyes
Point out for this emprize? Most sure there is;
Belial hath well predicted of our choice:
Mammon, stand forth! On thee th' election lights.
He spake, and all approve, for choice so fit
None could oppose; when Mammon thus replied.
Prince of this world! To whom these armies owe,
Lost but for thee in everlasting night,
The glorious prospect of yon rising sun,
'Tis not to evade the labor, but prevent
The failure of your hopes, that I beseech
Your wisdom to correct its choice, and lodge
This arduous embassy in abler hands:
Nathless if such your will, and my compeers
Adjudge me to this service, I submit:

In

In me is no repugnance, no delay;
For ever what these toiling hands could do,
Or patient thoughts devise, that I have done;
Whether in heav'n ordain'd to undermine
God's adamantine throne, or doom'd to dig
The solid sulphur of hell's burning soil,
Fearless I wrought, and, were there no tongues else
To vouch my services, these scars would speak.
How many daintier spirits do I see
Fair as in heav'n and in fresh bloom of youth,
Whilst I, with shrivel'd sinews cramp'd and scorch'd
'Midst pestilential damps and fiery blasts,
Drag as you see a miserable load,
Age-struck without the last resource of death:
This for myself, no more. You're not to know
The snares which I employ are golden snares;
These are my arts, and like the crafty slave,
Who in Rome's Circus hurls the fatal net
Over his fierce pursuer, so oft times

Have

Have I entangled the proud hearts of men,
And made their courage stoop to shameful bribes,
Paid for dishonest deeds, perjuries and plots,
That draw them off from God, who else had fill'd
His courts ere now with guests and peopled heav'n.
These weapons and these hands you still command;
So dear I hold the general cause at heart,
So disciplin'd am I in duty's school,
That reckless of all hazard I present
Myself your servant, or, if so fate wills,
Your sacrifice; for though from mortal man
Discomfiture I dread not, yet if CHRIST,
Whom the great Tempter foil'd not, shall stand forth
The champion of his follower, witness for me,
You my brave peers and this angelic host,
I sought not this bold height, whence if I fall,
I do but fall where SATAN could not stand.
Go then, exclaim'd th' Arch-Enemy of man,
Go, brave adventurer, go where glory calls;

Auspicious

Auspicious thoughts engender in my breast,
And now prophetic visions burst upon me:
I see the traitor JUDAS with a band
Of midnight ruffians seize his peaceful Lord:
They drag him to the bar, accuse, condemn;
He bleeds, he dies! Darkness involves the rest.
Ascend the air, brave spirit, and 'midst the shout
Of grateful myriads wing thy course to fame.

He said, and pointing to the sacred towers
Of God's high temple, wav'd his sceptred hand,
Whereat the infernal armies gave a shout
That shook the rocky desert to its base:
Meanwhile the fiend, ambassador of hell,
Exulting heard his high election crown'd
With these applauding voices, and the call
Of his great chieftain echo'd to the skies:
Pride swell'd his conscious breast; no longer now
Crouching with age and pain, but nèrv'd anew,
As with a spell transform'd, erect he stood
With

With towering stature tallest of the throng,
And looks of high supremacy and state.
And now from either shoulder he unfurl'd
His wide-stretch'd pinions, and uprising swift
Tower'd in mid-air; the host with loud acclaim
Hail'd his ascent; he on the well-pois'd wing
Hover'd awhile, till from his cloudy height
Sweeping the wide horizon he descried
Far in the west the holy city' of God,
His destin'd port, then to the orient sun
Turn'd his broad vans, and plied their utmost speed.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT.

MAMMON, alighting on the HOLY MOUNT, assumes the form and character of a Levite, and under that appearance goes in search of JUDAS ISCARIOT.....He meets that disciple most opportunely for his purpose in a solitary place, and entering into conversation with him, pretends a commission from the priests and elders for engaging him in their service with the promise of a reward, and urges many insidious arguments for detaching him from his Master....They separate with a promise on the part of JUDAS to report his final answer to the priests that evening....CHRIST is now brought to view, sitting in the midst of his disciples at his LAST SUPPER:....He addresses them in those solemn and affecting terms recorded in the Gospel of St. JOHN....Washes their feet, foretells his death, and points out to them his betrayer in the person of JUDAS, then present....The traitor, perceiving himself discovered, hastily departs....CHRIST, pitying the affliction of his disciples, tenderly consoles them with the promise of his support under their future tribulations, and concludes with an awful invocation to the FATHER in their behalf: whereupon, warning them that his hour is come, he goes forth to the garden.....A reflection, naturally springing from the subject, addressed to unbelievers, closes the book.

CALVARY.

BOOK II.

THE LAST SUPPER.

NOW on the consecrated Mount of God,
MAMMON, invisible to mortal eye,
Stooping the wing from his aerial height
With feet unhallow'd lands; a direful pest,
Farthest from heav'n of all that outcast crew,
Who fell from bliss; fit messenger was he,
And fatal was their choice who sent him forth
To work corruption's purpose in man's heart;
For in his pow'r excelling he can take
The semblance of each virtue, shift each form,
And turn and turn new faces on the world,
Till he hath snar'd a soul; then he appears
In

In nature as he is, loathsome, obscene,
Rapacious as those filthy monsters feign'd
By fabling poets of amphibious breed,
Harpies, of earth and ocean the foul spawn,
Half brute, half human, with cadaverous face
Horribly pale, and hollow hungry eye,
Glaring aghast, with wings outstretch'd to chace
And talons crook'd to pounce their mangled prey.
And now by dev'lish spell transform'd he seems
A reverend Levite, bearded to the waist;
Hypocrisy ne'er wore a graver mask;
And still with wolf-like watch he prowls around,
If haply in those haunts he might surprize
Occasion to put forth his damning arts,
And from the flock of their good Shepherd cull
One tainted straggler, one, whose sordid soul
Avarice might tempt to take the price of blood,
And sacrifice the Son of God for gold:
Of CHRIST no care had he, but to elude

His

His vigilance, which still was all his dread;
Nor of the Twelve, save JUDAS, was there one
Whom to assail; on him alone, on him,
Son of perdition, rested all the hopes
Of SATAN and his legions. Now the fiend
With ineffectual search had coasted all
The sacred region round, and in the shade
Beneath the temple porch awhile repos'd,
List'ning the converse of the idle crowd,
The sun then high at noon; and much they talk'd
Of CHRIST and his great miracles, of some
Elias deem'd, of some the Baptist John
Ris'n from the dead, but by all tongues confest
A prophet mighty both in word and deed:
Silent the whilst in secret musings wrapt
The wizard spirit stood, when all at once
Loud voices strike his ear, and straight comes one
Leaping and bounding 'midst the shouting throng,
A cripple new restor'd; the very bed,

Which

Which from his birth the palsied wretch had press'd,
Now in its turn was carried, and to all
Triumphantly expos'd: Behold, he cried,
The token of my cure; I am the man
Whom ye all knew, and this the doleful bed,
On which, fast bound in misery and pain,
Helpless before your charitable gates
I laid and begg'd for pity and relief:
Lo! I am free! Mark how these new-found limbs
Nimbly the health-restoring voice obey!
CHRIST gave the word; he spake and I am whole.
This whilst he heard, conviction smote the fiend;
His conscious heart a sudden tremor seiz'd
And off he slunk abash'd: A winding path
Led down the mount, and here as he pursued
In gloomy thought his solitary way,
Behold by happy chance the man he sought,
ISCARIOT, and alone: Joy flush'd the cheek
Of the incarnate dæmon, thus to find

His labour in auspicious moment crown'd.
Hail, son of Simon! peace be to thee, friend!
Fairly encounter'd art thou in good hour,
The priest-like Tempter cried; thy worth is known
To all our Levites, from whose tribe I come
With friendly greeting charg'd: This night they meet
In special conclave; our chief pontiff there
Will in the holy convocation move
Points of high import to our ancient law,
Questions it much importeth thee to hear,
And well accepted shalt thou be of all,
Who with large recompense and honors due
Will greet thee so complying: I have said.
Grave Sir, I know thee not, JUDAS replied;
Yet for thy greeting thanks, and peace for peace,
As holy men becomes. To him the fiend.
Unknown I well may be, who night and day
Serving God's altar rarely stir abroad,
And little commerce hold with this great world;

But thee I know one of that Teacher's train,
Who walks at large, nor shuns the haunts impure
Of sinners and of publicans: Alas!
That one of thy wise bearing should be seen
In such base fellowship, paging his steps,
Calling him Lord and Master, whom the world
In mere derision suffers to grow up
To full-blown vanity, at once to crush.
But good report is pregnant with thy name,
As one exempted from the general scorn;
And sure I am thou wilt not so abase
And lower thy nobler thoughts to one so mean,
Vile and mechanic; to the driv'ling crew
Of children and of women leave that task,
To Peter and his brethren of the net:
Fine reas'ning we shall have, and well be school'd,
When fishermen turn preachers and instill
Doctrines and laws, which Moses never taught.
Woe to our scribes! Rare mockery of the world
And

And the world's wisdom, if these simple folk,
Lur'd from their daily drudgery, should set up
Fishers of men; the synagogue, to them
A barren element, will never yield
Such gainful earnings as the sea affords.
And what is CHRIST, that JUDAS so should court
His starving service? What so tempting lure
Hath this deceiver to beguile thy hopes?
Not of this world my kingdom, he hath said;
Yet of this world are we, in this alone
We live and move, here only we expect
Or pain or pleasure, all that lies beyond
In the unknown abyss is dark as death.
And wherefore carriest thou that bag about?
A beggar needs no treasurer, and thy Lord
Feeds but by miracle: Alas for him,
Who serves a master, that keeps Sabbath fasts
Forty long days in the bare wilderness,
Makes poverty his passport into heav'n,

And bids us throw away life's present means
For doubtful chance of interest after life!
And art thou of all reason so bereft
As to account prosperity a crime,
Or think none blest but him, whose every step
Through misery's thorny path is mark'd with blood?
O son of Simon, take thy last resolve;
Either resign thy body to the worm,
And die with CHRIST, or him renounce, and live
Rich, honor'd, prosperous, and enjoy the world.
The Fiend now paus'd, well pleas'd that he had gain'd
Audience so large; when JUDAS, in whose soul
The pois'nous instillation 'gan to work,
Thus to corruption's advocate replied.
That CHRIST, rejected and despis'd of men,
Hath in this world no part I freely grant;
Therefore if we his followers, who renounce
Things present, build our hopes upon a dream
Of what shall never come, we are of all

Most

Most miserable; if we, who bid farewell
To all that Nature holds most dear to share
Sorrows and pains and poverty with CHRIST,
Find not those blissful mansions in the heav'n
Which he hath promis'd; if, when all is past
And this sad scene concludes, no reck'ning comes,
No grateful compensation after death,
Hard is our fate, and much hath he abus'd
Our weak credulity; but still these hopes
Of an expected glory, though with doubt
And darkness clouded, faint yet not extinct,
Yield not to words; words made them what they are,
CHRIST's words, and surely man ne'er spake like
Wherefore if these your doctors of the law [him;
Invite me to their conclave but to hear
A railing accusation, I hold off
From their assembly, and to CHRIST adhere,
As to the better reas'ner; and though poor
The servant, equal is the Master's lot,
Poor

Poor as the poorest, houseless and forlorn,
A man of sorrows; nor can we complain,
Whilst he of all we suffer still partakes,
First in all labours, penances and pains.
You ask, and bid me take my last resolve,
If I will give this body to the worm
And die with CHRIST: To die is Nature's dread;
Instinctively she loaths the gloomy grave,
And turns a longing eye to light and life;
But fortune gives to all things their degrees;
To them, who bask in sunshine thro' the day,
Night comes with double sadness, whilst to me,
Who toil from morn to noon, from noon to eve,
Yet nothing but a dim horizon see
Low'ring in clouds, darkness is nothing strange,
Nor death a terror: Wealth presents no dower
To wed me to the world; no pleasures cling
Around my heart; no soft affections woo
My longer stay on earth, there to prefer
Brief

Brief joys possess'd to hope of future bliss.

Thus whilst he 'plain'd the subtle Tempter's ear
Caught the soft murmur that betrays the soul,
The sigh capitulating virtue breathes,
When from her last defences she retreats;
Whereat a bolder tone he now assum'd,
And thus the wav'ring false disciple plied.

All joys that gold can purchase wait your choice;
Rich to your heart's ambition you shall be,
Nor only rich, but rescued from a doom
So dreadful, had you all the wealth in store,
Which the sea covers or the earth contains,
'Twere well bestow'd to purchase your redemption.
With CHRIST impending death, with me you meet
Life with encircling pleasures. Throw aside
That beggar's purse, your starving office spurn;
Serve God's high priest, whose treasury is full;
Cast those few mites away, the scanty dole
Of some contaminating leper's hand,

For

For which you bid God heal him and pass on;
Whilst he, good cred'lous soul, cries out amain,
As powerful fancy works, Lo! I am clean;
Behold a miracle! But gold performs
Greater and happier miracles than this:
Gold with a touch can heal the mind's disease,
Quicken the slow-pac'd blood, and make it dance
In tides of rapture through each thrilling vein;
Cast out that worst of dæmons, poverty,
And with a spell exorcise the sad heart,
Haunted with spectres of despair and spleen.
If then this prize can tempt thee, if thy soul
Still thirsts for life, for riches, for repose,
If in thy breast there dwells that manly scorn,
Which slighted merit feels, when envious pride
Thrusts it aside to build th' unworthy up,
Now, now assert it; from a Master turn,
Who turns from thee, who before thee exalts
Thy meaner brethren, Peter, James and John:

On

On them his partial smile for ever beams,
They have his love, his confidence, his heart;
Of them revolting he might well complain,
Of thee he cannot; thine were just revenge:
He is no traitor, who resents a wrong;
Who shares no confidence, can break no trust.
Bid conscience then be still, let no weak qualms
Damp thy reviving spirit; but when night
Wraps her dark curtain round this busy word,
Come thou to CAIAPHAS; there will be found
Our priests and scribes in council to attaint
And bring to judgment this presumptuous man,
Who boasts himself Messias Son of God.
If thou, to whom his midnight haunts are known,
His secret incantations and his spells,
By which he does those feats that cheat our sight,
Wilt to those guilty haunts conduct our guard,
And render up his person to the law,
Much praise and large reward shalt thou receive;

If

If thou wilt not—But wherefore should I doubt?
I would persuade, not threaten: Know withal
It is not thou, 'tis justice gives the blow;
The law will have its victim. Thinkest thou
That we, to whom the custody is given
Of God's prophetic oracles, ordain'd
To guard his worship and expound his laws,
Will let this innovating Teacher spurn
Our holy order, mock our ancient rites,
Prophane our Sabbaths, and himself exalt
Co-equal with JEHOVAH, to confound
His unity, and claim divided power?
No, let death arbitrate 'twixt him and us;
If he be very CHRIST, death shall not dare
To aim his dart at immortality;
His incorruption shall defy the grave:
If man, blaspheming man, he justly dies.
Living or dying thus his fate dispells
All mystery; truth starts of force to light,

And God is glorified in either case.
He ceas'd, and on the Traitor fix'd a look,
Which, like the serpent's fascinating eye,
Gaz'd motion's power away; sullen he stood,
As with a spell entranc'd; the aweful sense
Of his great Master's virtue and the dread
Of an hereafter terrible to thought,
No longer serv'd to hold the wizard fiend
And his fell arts at bay: The word of truth,
Sown on the surface of his stony heart,
Had perish'd without root; religion's lamp,
Faint and more faint as MAMMON's crafty breath
Blew up the storm of passion, now expir'd
In his benighted soul; there rankling pride,
Malicious envy, avarice and revenge,
Leagu'd with hell's minister and uncontroul'd
Their impious orgies held. At length the wretch,
To calm deliberate treachery resign'd,
With all th' unrighteous mammon in his heart
And

And vile prevarication on his lips,
Thus with consent in dubious phrase implied
The grand seducer of mankind dismiss'd.
Great is the peril of the attempt you urge,
For great the power of him you would destroy:
Therefore if I demand some pause for thought,
Deem it not much. Your offers shall be weigh'd;
But now no more: Occasions call me hence;
This night the Master hath convok'd the Twelve
To keep the sacred feast, ordain'd of God
With bread unleaven'd and the Paschal lamb:
Thither, tho' last and in his favor least,
I go, a cited guest: There whilst I sit
Unnotic'd at his table's lowest foot,
My meditations shall recall your words,
And ponder them apart. Say to your priests,
Those conservators of our ancient law,
This night they may expect my last resolve.
And now behold the length'ning shadow marks

The

The ev'ning hour, that warns me hence: Farewell!
This said, their conf'rence ended, they embrace
As friends, who plight their faith: Upon the touch,
So quick th' infection ran, so dire the blight,
The pois'nous ferment on the instant reach'd
ISCARIOT's tainted heart, and now he burnt
With the fell lust of gold. Joy seiz'd the Fiend;
For well he knew how mortal to the soul
That deadly aconite, the growth of hell.
Oh! wretch for ever lost, for ever curst,
Whom Mammon thus embraces! Who shall wake
Thy conscience from its lethargy? Who now
Shall stop the courses of that baneful drug,
And stem the swift destruction? 'Tis too late:
Better for thee hadst thou ne'er seen the light,
Or lost it ere this fatal hour had birth.
Thy doom is seal'd; hell hath its hour of joy,
Thou, traitor, an eternity of woe:
The meditation of thy heart shall hurl
Thee

Thee to perdition and thy Lord to death.

Now JUDAS down the mountain turn'd his steps;
Not so the Tempter; he from the high rock,
Exalted where he stood, his impious eye
Glanc'd o'er the city' of God, full in his view
From East to West in moony crescent stretch'd.
Here yet JEHOVAH was ador'd, here reign'd;
All else to SATAN and his idol gods [names
Thro' earth's wide range belong'd; to their dire
Each temple echo'd, every knee was bow'd:
How oft, ev'n here upon his holy hill,
Did Judah's kings with their polluted groves
Affront God's house, and pagan altars raise
To Chemos, Milcom, Ashtaroth and all
The host of heav'n within his sacred courts!
Witness that impious king, who pass'd his son
Through fire to Moloch, homicidal god,
Which rous'd th' Almighty's vengeance, and entail'd
Mournful captivity on all his race.

Hither,

Hither, as to the delug'd world of old,
In promis'd time the dove of peace was sent;
Upon this Ararat, his sacred mount,
He rested; hence salvation dawn'd on man:
Him to destroy the Tempter now aspir'd,
Secure of his new convert firmly leagu'd
In his dire plot and to perdition seal'd:
Nor rested on that mount the darkling Fiend,
Nor further need had he of priestly garb,
Than till he saw ISCARIOT join the train
Of CHRIST and his disciples; then at once
To his own airy properties dissolv'd
A spi'rit invisible, with eager speed
To hell's assembled chiefs he wing'd his flight.

The sun had sunk beneath the Western hills,
And now at ev'ning hour the Jews prepare
To celebrate their Passover, ordain'd
T' eternize their deliv'rance, when God's wrath
Smote ev'ry first-born male in Mizraim's coast,

Save

Save where the blood of lamb piacular,
Sprinkling the consecrated door, was found
Of the destroying angel: To this feast,
Prelusive of his own pure sacrifice
And type of his blood-shedding, JESUS came:
The guests were present and the table spread;
With loins begirt, as men upon the march,
And staff in hand, they snatch a hasty meal:
This done, in pensive meditation wrapt,
The Savior, conscious of impending death,
Sate in the midst; to his all-present mind
The treason and the traitor stood confest.
Low'ring, abash'd and from the rest apart,
ISCARIOT at the table's lowest foot
Took post, where best he might escape that glance,
From whose intelligence no heart could hide
Its guilty meditations: All eyes else
Were center'd on the Savior's face divine,
Which with the brightness of the Godhead mix'd

Traces

Traces of human sorrow, and display'd
The workings of a mind, where mercy seem'd
Struggling to reconcile some mortal wrong
To pardon and forbearance: Such a look
Made silence sacred, every tongue was mute;
Ev'n PETER's zeal forbore the vent of words,
Or spent itself in murmurs half supprest.
At length the meek REDEEMER rais'd his eyes,
Where gentle resignation, tempering grief,
Beam'd grace ineffable on all around,
And with these words the awful silence broke.
Muse not if I am sad, nor stand aghast
As doubtful of my constancy; these pangs
And more which I must suffer, were foreseen;
The hour now coming comes not by surprize,
It is the consummation of my charge,
And fills the measure of atonement up.
Shall I then say, Father, avert this hour,
And save me from these agonies? Not so

With heart prepar'd to suffer and submit
I meet my doom forewarn'd: Yet ere we part
Take this last office from your Master's hands;
And when you see me stoop to wash your feet,
As soon you shall, remember 'tis your Lord,
Your dying Lord this legacy bequeaths,
And edify by his humility.

This said, his seamless mantle he threw off,
And girt his tunic close about his waist;
And now with mute amazement they beheld
The Son of God in servant-like attire
Prepar'd to execute his menial task.
All gaz'd, all wonder'd, but no voice oppos'd;
None dar'd to pray forbearance of the deed,
Till he, whose heart was ever on his lips,
PETER, in warm expostulation cried:

Lord, dost thou wash my feet, thy servant's feet,
Mean as the dust he treads on? Never, Lord,
Never shalt thou do that for one so vile,

So

So all-unworthy: That be far from thee!
Such homage ill beseemeth thee to pay,
Me to receive.—To him the Lord replied:
PETER, as yet thou know'st not what I do,
Hereafter thou shalt know; therefore no more:
Cease to oppose, for if I wash thee not,
With me thou hast no part.—Struck to the soul
With horror at the thought, his eager words,
Wing'd with the flame of rhapsody, burst forth:
Oh! not my feet alone, my hands, my head,
Wash me all o'er, and sanctify each part.
There needs not this, the meek REDEEMER cried,
Enough is done; thus wash'd, though but in part,
Thou shalt be clean throughout: Yet I'll not say
Ye are all clean: Spite of the Shepherd's care
The taint hath touch'd his flock. Alas! for him
On whom the foul contamination lights;
Woe to that wretch that ever he was born!
And do ye need a comment to expound

This lesson of humility and love?
Ye call me Lord and Master; well ye say,
For such in truth I am; if then your Lord
Be meek and lowly, will not ye renounce
Pride and contention? If the Master stoops
To wash his feet who serves, shall ye do less
To these your equal brethren? Learn of me,
And each with other deal, as I with you:
Write on your hearts my words; the time draws nigh
When I shall speak no more with you on earth:
Ye have all heard; how blest if ye obey!
I speak not of you all: Whilst here ye sit
In seeming fellowship around my board,
Sharing this social meal, my last on earth,
Doubt not but I can search into your breasts,
And see whose hearts are loyal, whose is false;
And mark me well, I fall not by man's wiles,
Not unpredicted is the trait'rous act,
And well I know the wretch, whose faithless hand

Dips with me in the dish, shall soon be dy'd
With my devoted blood. Betray'd I am,
Deceiv'd I cannot be.——This when they heard,
Each with the other interchang'd a look
Of question and suspect; speechless they star'd,
Confounded and aghast: As men drawn forth
For decimation tremble to unfold
The lot of life or death, so these in doubt
On whom the word of prophecy might light,
Curious yet fearful to enquire of CHRIST,
Search'd their own hearts in silence. All perceiv'd
Omniscience, which to God alone belongs,
Familiar with their thoughts, and every soul,
Save that dire wretch whom conscience inly smote,
Trembled lest unpremeditated guilt
Might be denounc'd upon him, or the sin
Of one man, as of Korah, move the Lord
With the whole congregation to be wroth.
But PETER, in whose ever-anxious mind

These terrors undispell'd long could not dwell,
To the belov'd Disciple, on the breast
Of CHRIST reclining, now gave sign to ask
The fearful question, in what traitor's heart
Plot so accurs'd could harbour. Thus besought,
Though much his humble nature fear'd offence,
In accent soft, with supplicating eye
Turn'd on the Master, the meek suitor said:
Lord, shew thy true and faithful servants grace,
And let us know the traitor.—He it is,
JESUS replied, on whom I shall bestow
This sop, when I have dipp'd it in my cup.
He said, and as he plung'd the morsel in,
All eyes were fix'd upon the fatal work,
Wond'ring on whom he would bestow the spell;
And soon with silent horror they beheld
The saturated sop to JUDAS giv'n,
Pledge of perdition; he with greedy haste
Devour'd it, by the fiend within him urg'd;

For

For MAMMON to the dark divan had told
The joyful tidings, and had posted back
Swift as the magic whirlwind conjur'd up
By all hell's wizard imps could drive him on,
And now sate nestling in the traitor's heart,
Brooding his filthy spawn: Great was the joy
Of the infernal tempter, thus to find
That guardian Pow'r, whose providence he fear'd,
By these symbolic elements withdrawn,
And his apostate victim now cast out
From the Lord's Supper, alien from God's grace,
And soul-surrender'd to hell's gloomy realm.
Now, as the spell within him 'gan to work,
The traitor's visage, like the troubled sea
Uptorn and furrow'd with tempestuous winds,
Shifted its hues, now deadly pale, aghast
And horror-struck, now fiery red, deform'd
With hellish rage, and from man's semblance chang'd
To very dæmon, terrible to sight!

Oh!

Oh! what a fall from heav'n to deeper hell
Than thought can fathom, horrors worse than heart
Of man, unless abandon'd of his God,
Can suffer or conceive! Words do but fail
To paint that unreveal'd abyss, those depths
Of the immeasu'rable profound, where groans,
Wailings and woes and tossings amidst fires
Unquenchable await the wretch condemn'd!
Meanwhile in cloudless majesty and mild
The Savior's face divine on all around
Effulgent beam'd; about his temples shone
A radiant glory: This when JUDAS saw,
Whom now the spi'rit of darkness had possess'd,
And none such in the sphere of that pure light
Long could abide, he started from his couch
Prepar'd for flight, when thus in few the Lord—
Go then! and what thou hast in hand to do,
Do quickly; so depart!—The word of power,
Though gentle yet commanding, JUDAS heard,

And

And instantly the spirit took him thence;
Nor could he not obey, for so rebuk'd
The prince of hell, SATAN himself, had fled.
The faithful remnant sate in mute suspense,
Pondering what this dismission might import.
The Master with a glance discern'd their thoughts;
He saw them in profound conjecture lost,
Humbled in heart and sad, their honor stain'd
By base defection, and their faith convuls'd:
When thus, at once to strengthen and console
Their wav'ring minds, these healing words he spake.
Let not your heart be troubled: Ye believe
In God, believe also in me his Son.
Doubt not but in the compass of the heav'ns
My Father will provide for all his Saints
Mansions of peace, seats of eternal bliss,
Where spi'rits made perfect after death shall dwell,
And rest from earthly toils: Thither I go
To seal your sure election, and prepare

For

For you my faithful servants an abode;
That, as in sorrow here, so there in bliss
With me your Lord, now dying for your sakes,
Ye may surmount the grave, and ever live
In heavenly communion undisturb'd.
Lament not therefore if I now depart,
Your provident precursor, for ye know
Whither I go, and also know the way.
Lord, we are ignorant and dim-sighted men,
THOMAS replied, we see not what thou seest;
And as it stands not in our reach to guess
Whither thou go'st, how should we know the way?
I am the way, th' inspired Teacher cried,
I am the Truth, the Life: None can approach
The Father but by me; me had ye known,
This blindness had been done away, and now
Behold Him present!---Where? still doubting cried
One of th' astonish'd number; Oh! impart
That intellectual vision to discern

And

And see the Father; set him in our view
In form demonstrative; we ask no more.
Say'st thou? resum'd the Lord, and have I been
So long familiar yet so little known?
Will not the works, O PHILIP, I have done,
Done in thy sight, instruct thee whence I am,
And what my power? Doth there need light for this?
'Midst the broad blaze of proofs that shines about thee
Can'st thou not see God's presence in his power?
Of this mortality which ye behold,
This fleshly self, I speak not; 'tis the Spirit,
The virtue of my Father, which is in me,
In act how visible, in voice how strong,
Clear and express! And can you see and hear
And yet withhold belief? Oh, slow of faith!
If words cannot persuade, let works convince:
If miracles, which only God can do,
Are done before your eyes, how say you then,
Shew us the Father? Sanctify your hearts

From

From fear and terror; though the hour comes on,
When to the silent mansions of the dead
From this impeni'tent world I must withdraw,
Mourn not, but let your grief be turn'd to joy;
For as in me the Father, so in Him
I live and move; my Spirit, though unseen
Still present, shall protect and hover o'er you.
I will not leave you comfortless; my Name
Shall be your tower of refuge; with my peace
Now dying I endow you; of that peace
The powers of this world never shall despoil you,
And in my Name whatever ye shall ask
Believing, ye shall have: By faith in me
Ye shall command the elements, uplift
The everlasting mountains by their roots,
And whelm them in the centre of the sea:
This in my Name potential ye shall do,
And greater works than this: By faith in me
Ye shall confront th' oppressor; 'midst the shock

Of

Of tribulations and the angry scorn
Of a malignant world, abhorr'd, despis'd,
Thrust from their synagogues, ye shall possess
Your souls in patience, glorying to endure
Like tribulation with your martyr'd Lord.
Despair not therefore, for before that day
A Comforter shall come, whom I will send,
And he shall teach you all things. When ye stand
Before the judgment-seat of impious men
Friendless, accus'd, environ'd with a throng
Of perjur'd witnesses athirst for blood,
Your Guardian Spirit shall provide a voice,
Action and eloquence, and prompt your lips
With untaught languages to sound my Name
With tongue miraculous through all the world.
Wars then and rumors and portentous signs,
Famine and earthquakes and disastrous plagues
Shall vex the nations; prophets shall arise
With lying divinations to confound

The weak, pervert the wavering and perplex
The very Saints themselves. Await the time;
These are but harbingers of mightier woes;
The day of terror is but in its dawn:
The powers of earth and heav'n must undergo
Direful convulsion; this majestic pile,
This temple, shall become so mere a wreck,
That not one stone shall rest upon another:
Then shall your hour of tribulation come;
Then to confess my Name shall be your crime
By torture and by death to be aton'd:
The tyrants of the world shall then let loose
Their persecuting rage, and great shall be
The falling-off of many; rocks and caves
Shall be your hiding-places, yet from thence
Your sound shall echo to the farthest ends
Of the redeemed earth; from those dark cells
The beams of revelation shall break forth,
Maugre the pow'rs of hell; and blest is he,
Whose

Whose faith unshaken shall abide the time,
Till the great end and consummation comes
My peace and my salvation to ensure.
Few are the moments now, and passing swift,
Which thus conversing we have yet in hand.
Servants no more, henceforth I call you friends;
Therefore, as friends and children, let your love
Each to the other knit your hearts together
In brotherly communion; this command,
New to the world, I give you: Let good will,
And peace and concord harmonize your souls,
And mark you as the followers of him,
Whose every act was charity, whose life
Was spent and clos'd expiring for your sakes:
And stronger proof of love what man can give,
Than to yield up his body to the grave,
And die, as shortly I shall, for his friends?
Time was that I have shadow'd out my speech
In proverbs and allusions; time now is
To

To cast obscurity aside and shew
Th' unveiled glories of the Father to you.
Henceforward ye shall ask of Him and have;
My Name for your petitions shall suffice;
My prayers ye need not, for the Father's love
Without an intercessor shall protect
Mine, as you love me, and prevent your wants.
From Him I came into this world, to Him,
This world now leaving, I again return.

This said, conviction smote their glowing hearts
With faith, and hope's bright image new inspir'd,
And scenes of future glory beaming on them:
When thus with voices join'd in loud acclaim
Christ in the Godhead manifest they hail'd.

Now, Lord, we hear and understand thy words,
Plain words and not in parables involv'd:
Now are we sure all knowledge is reveal'd,
All pow'r committed to thee from above,
And without further question we believe

And henceforth know thou camest forth from God.
Do ye at length believe? the Master cried;
Behold, the hour comes on, yea now is come,
When your strong faith shall stagger at the scene
Of these impending horrors, and shrink back
Confounded and appall'd; to the four winds,
Wide as your fears can spread you, all shall fly,
And leave me struggling with a storm of woes
Unfriended and alone: what did I say?
Alone I cannot be, for in me dwells
The Father ever present: Let this thought
Arm you with constancy to meet the shock
Of tribulation, and withstand the powers
Of this brief world; for to your comfort know,
I have o'ercome the world. This said, he paus'd,
And sate, whilst all were hush'd, as one entranc'd,
So fast the heav'nly vision pour'd upon him:
Then with uplifted eyes and heaving breast,
Full of his God, this solemn pray'r breath'd forth.

O Father! give thy glory to the Son,
As he hath glorified thy Name on earth, [know
And these, whom thou hast giv'n him, taught to
Thee, the true God alone, and JESUS CHRIST, 700
Thy messenger and advocate with thee
For lost mankind. Father! To me restore
That glory, which was mine before all time,
Or e'er the world was made and man fell off
From his obedience, now at length redeem'd 705
From sin by my atonement, and made heir
Of life eternal, purchas'd with my blood.
The act of mediation is complete;
Thy work is finish'd and thy Name gone forth
To these of thine election: Thine they were, 710
To me thou gav'st them, and they have receiv'd
And kept as faithful witnesses thy Word.
For them I pray: The world, which now I leave,
Hath no more part in me; for them alone,
Not for the world, I pray; they must abide, 715

I shall

I shall depart and be at peace with Thee.
O holy Father! keep them in thy Name
Whole and entire, link'd in the bond of faith,
Firm as I hold them. One alone is lost,
Son of perdition; him the prophets saw
In their prospective visions, and foretold
That so thy Son should suffer; but for these,
They are unstain'd, they stand not in the guilt
And condemnation of that wretch accurst.
I pray thee not to take them from the world,
Through which I send them forth as shining lights
To draw men's eyes and hearts, and guide their search
To the bright source, whence thy salvation beams.
These are my ministers, as I am thine:
Oh! sanctify them through thy truth! For them,
And all through them converted to thy word,
Father! I pray. Translate them in thy time
From this unquiet world to that high state
Of heav'nly bliss, where they may dwell with me

And see my glory: So shall they receive
Thy love, through me transfus'd into their hearts,
And rest from all their sorrows in thy peace.
So spake the Lord, and with these gracious words
His faithful remnant cheer'd, for soft they fell
As heav'n's blest dew upon the thirsty hills,
And sweet the healing balm, which they distill'd
On sorrow-wounded souls.—Now treach'rous eve
Crept silent on, and threw her dusky veil
O'er Nature's face, masking the deeds of men:
The Savior rose, for in his conscious breast
A warning voice had whisper'd, Up, arise,
Go forth to death! One solemn act remains,
One sacrifice; 'tis now God's wrath demands
Atonement, a whole world's redemption now
Hangs on the minute's point. Behold him then,
A voluntary victim, leading forth
His sad disciples to the fatal spot,
Where treason lurk'd in ambush for his life,
Where

Where stood the prince of darkness and his pow'rs
Arm'd with commission'd terrors to assail
Him single, him forsaken, him oppos'd
To myriads, whilst Heav'n's angels soar'd aloof
Trembling spectators of th' unequal strife.
Who now so comfortless as God's own Son?
His soul in woes unutterable whelm'd,
All commerce with its native heav'n denied,
Press'd down to earth; nor other strength had he,
Than in his human nature might be found,
To combat more than human agonies,
Accumulated pangs, which all the sins
Of all the world, from loss of Paradise
By man's first fall to the last damning page
Of heav'n's black register, had pil'd upon him,
The mass of ages. Oh! what tongue can speak
The love of our REDEEMER? And yet man,
Ingrateful impious man, hourly reviles
His Benefactor's name, affects the style
Of

Of sophistry and metaphysic pride
To quibble with salvation, and renounce
Those guides, that lead us by the hand to heav'n.
This they call reason, this man's natural right
To question his Creator, and in pride
Of independent dignity reject
Salvation, rather than consent to own
God's privilege to save him by such means,
As to God's wisdom best and meetest seem'd.
Such monsters doth this teeming earth produce:
Impious audacity! which dares to say—
I need no Mediator, I disclaim
CHRIST and his offer'd peace; 'twixt God and me
I want no advocate to plead my cause,
By my own rectitude I stand or fall:
The Evangelic Volumes I regard
As fabricated tales of juggling tricks,
Witness'd by none but partners in the craft:
Deep read in pagan story I confront

The

The sacred records with the silent page
Of those, who register no strange eclipse,
No noon-day darkness, not one friendly groan
Of sympathising Nature to attest
CHRIST's dying hour.—Shut, shut the Book of Life;
Go to the Jews, the Pagans, for thy creed,
Go to the dust, blasphemer! In the ear
Of Death whisper thy doubts, and learn of him
Thy folly's confutation and thy doom
In those sad realms, to which he shall conduct
Thy trembling soul, when the Arch-angel's trump
Hath summon'd thee to judgment, and set ope
The grave, thy rashness deem'd for ever clos'd.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT.

ISCARIOT, having separated himself from CHRIST, wanders through the streets of the city in a disconsolate manner, and at length arrives at the Brook CEDRON without the gates.....Here he breaks forth into soliloquy, in which, after reviewing his past situation, he affects to justify his present motives for betraying his Master to the priests..... CHRIST and his disciples, proceeding to the Mount of OLIVES, are discovered by him as they are passing the brook in their way thither, and JUDAS resolves upon availing himself of the opportunity for delivering CHRIST into the hands of his enemies.....In the mean time the priests and elders assemble in the palace of Caiaphas, and there hold a council upon the measures to be pursued for the apprehension of CHRIST: The high priest harangues the assembly to this immediate purport: In the interim JUDAS is announced, and being admitted makes his proposal to the council; this produces some observations on the part of CAIAPHAS, and is objected to by NICODEMUS, who after delivering his opinion, quits the assembly.....CAIAPHAS then takes up the matter afresh, controverts the sentiments of NICODEMUS, and with the approbation of all present closes with the proposals of JUDAS, and sends out a company with that traitorous disciple to the Mount of OLIVES, there to apprehend the person of CHRIST.....The assembly breaks up, and the hall is no sooner evacuated by the priests and elders, than their seats are filled by SATAN and his infernal spirits.....SATAN addresses to them a congratulatory speech on the success of MAMMON's temptation, on whom he bestows many high encomiums; an ovation takes place in honor of that dæmon, when CHEMOS appears wounded by the spear of GABRIEL, whom he had encountered on the Mount of OLIVES, where he had been posted as a spy upon the motions of CHRIST and his disciples.....SATAN, enraged at the account, sallies forth with a resolution to revenge the attack by punishing the temerity of GABRIEL, arms himself for the occasion, and after much proud vaunting of his superior prowess disappears, and the infernal spirits disperse.

CALVARY.

BOOK III.

THE TREASON OF JUDAS.

DARK came the ev'ning on, and the pale moon,
Now faintly glimm'ring through a wint'ry cloud,
Shed her dim horrors o'er the shadowy earth;
Whilst through the silent streets with step disturb'd,
And heart by hellish meditations rent,
The Outcast of the Lord pursued his way,
ISCARIOT, name for evermore accurst.
Onward he went unquestion'd, unobserv'd,
For all upon this solemn night kept house,
Nor stopp'd till forth the city gates he came
To Cedron's brook, whose bubbling current laves
The olive-crowned Mount, favor'd of CHRIST

For

For its umbrageous groves and silent haunts,
For pray'r and contemplation fit retreat.
Here first, as one awaken'd to new thoughts,
Starting he check'd his step, and with a groan,
That rent his lab'ring bosom, thus broke forth.

Oh, my torn heart! Oh, soul-tormenting scenes!
Can I forget the blissful hours I've pass'd
Beneath your shades list'ning the Master's words?
When as he spake of heav'n and heav'nly joys,
Of righteousness and the blest Spi'rits with God,
Such life in his description glow'd, methought
All Paradise was present to my view
And courted me to enter. Heav'n and earth!
Must I remember? Never man like him
Could with such magic eloquence entrance
The senses of his hearers, lift the soul
To heav'nly contemplations and transport
To thoughts beyond itself; thence to look down
Upon this lower world and all its cares,

Its

Its pains, its persecutions with contempt:
Sometimes envelop'd in mysterious schemes
And parables he couch'd the moral truth,
Which painted on the memory left its tints
Indelible: But when with tongue inspir'd
The fall of nations he foretold, and drew
The curtain of futurity aside;
When in the pomp of numbers he describ'd
Jerusalem beleaguer'd with a host
Of Gentile foes and trodden down to dust,
Her matrons and her virgins whelm'd in blood,
Or dragg'd to violation, shame and bondage
By ruffian spoilers; when his soaring flight,
Spurning the world's wide compass, scal'd the skies,
And there amidst the empyrean fields,
As in his proper region, shook the spheres
Of sun, moon, stars, as with a master's hand,
And shew'd them falling in prophetic awe
Of his own glorious coming in a cloud

With

With pow'r and state supernal, then our hearts
With sympathetic raptures burnt within us,
And we vain mortals saw, or thought we saw,
Our own vile bodies glorified to share
In his triumphant entry, and ourselves
To dignities and thrones and starry spheres
Exalted, loftiest in the realms of light.
But now these bright illusions are no more;
Vanish'd these glitt'ring scenes, my claims on heav'n
All cancell'd, and my hopes a bankrupt's dream,
Mocking the haunted fancy with a pile
Of visionary wealth. Behold me sham'd,
Banish'd his board, detected, and my thoughts
Turn'd outward to provoke my brethren's scorn,
And blazon forth his prescience: Let that pass!
Traitor pronounc'd, a traitor I will be;
That prophecy at least shall be fulfill'd.
Though master of my will I could refute
And dash his bold prediction, yet my heart
Ponders

Ponders revenge more suited to its wrongs,
Greater than such slight triumph can bestow,
And not less terrible than death itself.
This night, the last that he shall walk at large,
This night shall be his triumph or his fall.
If these grave elders, who conspire his death,
These reverend priests revolt not from the deed,
That casts on them, their function and their tribe
The peril of his blood, why should my heart
Shrink from its purpose? What have I to fear
In act subordinate, in cause supreme,
Traitor prejudg'd, of uncommitted crimes
Arraign'd, and thrown upon the world condemn'd?
More he had said, but, like a serpent coil'd,
With sudden start he shrunk into himself,
And list'ning held his breath to catch the sound
Of steps, that echoing o'er the flinty soil
Bespoke a company in near approach:
With these the Master's well-known voice he heard;
Whereat,

Whereat, like murd'rous Cain when call'd of God,
The cow'ring conscious outcast slunk aside,
And wrapp'd his russet cloak about his head,
Then darkling stood; the holy troop meanwhile
Forded the shallow brook and held their way
Strait to the Olive Mount, their wonted haunt.
Forth sprung the lurking caitiff from his watch:
The greedy Mammon rush'd upon his heart,
Glorying that now he held them in his net,
Darkness conspiring with occasions apt
Of hour and place to make his vengeance sure.
Remorse was dead within him, every sense
Of virtue lost, yet in his coward breast
Such languor, dread and cold repugnance dwelt,
Scarce could the breath of hell's worst fiend suffice
To blow it into flame: Now sudden rage
Impell'd him onward; now with palsied fear
Struck back, he reel'd and shook in ev'ry joint.
This SATAN saw, and evermore at hand

To

To drive the wav'ring sinner to his doom,
Breath'd all his spi'rit upon him ; direr blast
Cocytus never vented, the full tide
Of aconite engender'd with his blood,
His brain, set ev'ry fev'rish nerve in play,
And screw'd his heated fancy to the pitch
Of daring and defiance ; yet the wretch,
Not less a traitor to himself than CHRIST,
Or e'er the acting of the dreadful deed
Thus strove by sophistry to gloss it o'er.
Why do I doubt ? What horrors shake my mind ?
Why should not my affronted honor stir
Me to betray, as their insulted law
Provokes our elders to destroy their foe ?
For Moses they, I for myself oppose ;
And where's the wrong, if he, who knows my heart
And all its meditations, will not deign
To turn it from its purpose, and divert
The danger he foreknows ; nay rather helps

To lure the embryo treason into birth?
Either his own free will makes death its choice,
And so becomes accomplice in the deed,
Or else, foredoom'd to die, he knows his hour,
And thus, not acting of ourselves but rul'd
By strong necessity, we stand absolv'd,
Mere guiltless tools and instruments of fate.
What then? Why let the Scriptures be fulfill'd,
Let prophecies, which are the voice of God,
Sound out his knell; we fight not against Heav'n.
Let CHRIST, if glory waits him in the grave,
Descend into the dust and seek it there:
If his soul covets to make league with death,
And dwell in consort with corruption's worm,
What time more apt for death than this dark hour,
Image of death itself? And who so fit
As God's high-priest, the temple's minister,
To put life's intervening veil aside,
And usher him to glory? I meanwhile,

His

His humble harbinger, will go before
T' announce his coming, and make clear the road
That leads to death, the goal of his ambition.
Yet how if all this tame indifference
Be but a feint to draw the world about him,
And then amaze them with some grand display
Of wonder-working power? And who can tell
How far his hand miraculous may stretch,
Who from the tomb pluck'd forth the fest'ring corpse
Of shrowded Lazarus, three days in earth,
And bade him live again? Stupendous act!
This we beheld and hail'd him Lord of Life;
But still the unconverted Jews stood off,
And deem'd us witnesses of slight account,
Weak cred'lous men, first dup'd and thence become
Associates in imposture. What remains
But instantly to put my thoughts in act,
And yield him up to those, who in th' attempt
Succeeding vindicate their disbelief,

Failing abide the shame of their defeat? 165
In this or that opinion there must be
A dangerous error; to persist were fatal:
This night dispells all doubt: If he be CHRIST,
He lives confest and triumphs over death;
If man, he falls unpitied and abjur'd. 170
Thus for foul deeds pretending fair excuse,
The caitiff wretch on trait'rous errand bent,
Back through the city gates pursu'd his way,
And to his nightly assignation hied.
Perch'd on the summit of the sacred Mount, 175
Should'ring God's temple, a proud palace stood:
There dwelt the sovereign pontiff, and this night
Held solemn convocation and consult,
Not for God's glory, other cares had they,
Cares nearer to their selfish hearts, concerns 180
Heav'n had no part in, impious dire cabals
How to prevent the day-spring from on high,
Now by CHRIST's revelation and his acts
Miraculous

Miraculous just dawning on the world,
Aforetime wrapt in darkness black as death,
Best veil for their hypocrisy and craft.
In their great hall of council, there in ranks,
Precedencies and dignities dispos'd,
Doctors and long-rob'd pharisees and scribes
And bearded elders met; senate, to whom
For machinations, plots and secret wiles
Rome's purple conclave stoops. High over all
On throne pontifical in robes of state,
With sacred ephod girt of various hues,
And breast-plate glitt'ring bright with mystic gems,
Mitre-crown'd CAIAPHAS, the temple's chief,
Exalted sate: The sanhedrim was full.
All came, whom lust of power, or bigot zeal,
Or enmity to CHRIST rous'd to the call;
Mouth-worshippers of God, agents of hell
In heart, and hypocrites abhorr'd of CHRIST,
To public scorn held up and pictur'd out

As rebel husbandmen, who basely slew
Their Lord's commission'd Son. Scarce was there one,
Whose galled conscience had not felt the sting
Of some keen truth extorted from the lips
Of the else-humble JESUS, meek to all
But the proud Pharisee or cavi'lling Scribe,
To knaves, who thought by cunning to outwit
Wisdom itself, and snare him in his talk;
To hypocrites, who fasted oft with sad
And woe-worn faces to be seen of men,
Or such as made long pray'rs for a display
Of righteousness, and vaunted their good deeds,
Mocking their conscience and insulting Heav'n:
To these in all the majesty of truth
Frowning he spake, nor spar'd he for rebuke
Severe, indignant; many a time and oft
To their whole sect he had denounced woe,
Woe trembled on their heads: What wonder then,
If thus combin'd by interest to oppose

His

His spreading glories, their envenom'd hearts.
Rankled with envy, hatred and revenge?
Nor were there wanting to their great divan
Those, who can work unseen within the heart,
Dark ministers, who know to touch the springs
And cords, whose movements can convulse the soul
With furious passions, bursting from their mine,
Like sulph'rous fires that tear the quaking earth.
SATAN himself was there, for at this hour
He and his host had furlough upon earth,
Dæmons of blood, ambition, envy, strife [tongues,
Rang'd the vex'd world at large: Loud were their
And fiery hot their zeal against the LORD,
Whose miracles, resounding through the land,
Rung in their ears the downfall of their pow'r,
Ill-omen'd knell.—Brethren! 'tis time to rouse,
Cried CAIAPHAS, and started from his throne
Furious as Korah, when at his tent door
With his rebellious company he stood,

And

And waving high his censer call'd aloud
To mutiny 'gainst Moses: So now call'd
With voice as loud, and deeper plung'd in crime
Than these who sunk outright, this second priest,
This worse revolter against God himself
In his own Son reflected; from his state,
High o'er their heads exalted, he look'd down
On all beneath; then with uplifted eyes
And hands extended, as in act to rend
His robes pontifical—Yes, sacred seers,
Again he cried, yes, venerable priests,
Elders, and reverend sages of our law,
'Tis more than time to call your vengeance up;
Awake! ye sleep too long: For me, your slave,
Servant of servants, me, by how much more
In place exalted so much more in heart
Abas'd, as meritless of such high state,
I were content to cast these robes aside,
Pluck off this beard, and on this mitred head,
Unworthy

Unworthy of such honors, scatter dust
And ashes, might such penitence avert
The shame, that for my sins is falling on you,
And quell the mad'ning faction now afloat,
Since this bold Bethlemite hath started up
To mock the church of God. Shall it be said,
That for my punishment these evils light
On you the righteous? that in my day rose
This innovator to conspire your fall,
To broach new doctrines and unhinge the faith
Of the still wav'ring multitude? If I,
If I am in the crime, if in your thoughts
My negligence hath foster'd this revolt,
Make me your sacrifice, thrust me from hence,
For this high place unfit; set up your cross,
And there exalt me: But if I am clear,
And this your looks encourage me to hope,
If CHRIST not CAIAPHAS deserves the death,
Why do ye pause? What terror holds you back?

Time-

Time-honor'd rabbi, elders, sages, guides
And masters of our Israel! ye, by whom
Our synagogues are taught, of God's own law
Interpreters ordain'd, which of your grave
And reverend council will at once unfold
To my yet faithless ears the mighty spell
By which this JESUS works? Who will expound
This prodigy, that sets the crowd agape,
This more than man, of whom the people bruit
These more than human doings? You are dumb;
None offers a reply; for none will say
This wisdom and these mighty works accord
With one so mean of birth, with Joseph's son,
A base mechanic: Fitter task for him
To use his father's craft, and humbly ply
The workman's tools, than in the temple sit
Disputing with our doctors; or withdrawn,
As late the Baptist, to some desert mount,
There sit in sullen dignity enthron'd,

And

And from his rocky theatre declaim
To list'ning thousands. Here be some have heard
His doctrines, many have endur'd his taunts,
And though in wise and well-pois'd minds like your's
Such meteors breed no terror, yet they draw
The gazing vulgar, and so rank a taint
Runs through th' infected fold, that much I doubt
If half the flock of Israel be not touch'd;
So diligent is he to spread the plague,
So careless we to stem it. If his word
Be suffer'd thus to overturn our law,
The monument of ages, then alas!
We've seen the last of these solemnities:
Before this night returns there'll not be found
Or lamb to sacrifice, or priest to slay,
Or temple to receive our Paschal rites;
Rome, whose ambition grasps the conquer'd world,
Shall plant her eagles on our holy mount,
And Jupiter usurp JEHOVAH's shrine.

He

He paus'd, yet stood as one in act to speak,
Struggling for words, which furious passion choak'd
And stifled on his tongue ; a stormy cloud
Hung on his brow, his visage ghastly pale,
Mad'ning with rage he stampt and shook his robe :
As when the Delphic prophetess, convuls'd
And foaming on her tripod, sets aghast
The scar'd enthusiasts, who believe her fill'd
And fighting with the God oracular ;
So through the hall of council silence reign'd,
Whilst expectation turn'd all eyes and ears
On their rapt prophet ; till the word being giv'n,
That one of CHRIST's disciples stood without
And instant audience crav'd, that awful name
Their spell-bound faculties at once set free ;
Instant loud murmurs fill'd the vaulted roof,
Like the deep roar of subterranean tides,
Whose eddies undermine the cavern'd shores
Of sea-girt Mona or Bermuda's isle :

This

This past, the senate's chief resum'd his throne ;
Whence from his state inclining he gave sign
For silence and commanded to admit
Their unexpected suitor ; at the word
Wide flew the doors apart, and there behold
With cloak to' the knee tuck'd up and staff in hand
ISCARIOT, caitiff viler than the worst
That e'er wore pilgrim's sanctimonious garb
In after-times, when fierce crusading zeal
Sent forth its wand'ring eremites to put
The murd'rous sword in meek Religion's hand,
The cross, on which our patient Lord expir'd,
Their badge of victory, and signal made
For their destroying armies, lur'd to war
With pardons earnt in fields of carnage, fought
For God's pretended glory', as if, dire hope !
Rivers of blood could waft their souls to heav'n.
Founder of these, and prototype of all,
Who dy'd the cross with blood, ISCARIOT stood
Full

Full of the fiend, and cast around on all
His haggard eyes, that augur'd vengeful ire
And fraud deep brooding in his treach'rous heart:
When after pause now summon'd to expound
His purpose, whether by his Master sent,
Or self-impell'd, thus MAMMON'S convert spake.
Fathers of Israel, patrons of our law,
And chiefly thou, great priest, vicar of God,
And faithful shepherd of the remnant sav'd
From Abraham's scatter'd flock! I muse not, lords,
That you are cast in wonder to behold
Me standing in this place, me, to your cause
Unfriendly deem'd, and, which to all is known
Nor on my part denied, one of the Twelve,
And follower of JESUS. But, grave sirs,
I do adjure you by your love to truth,
No longer wear this jealous eye upon me,
Than to your patient ears I shall unfold,
Why hither I am come, not as a thief

To

To steal into your councils, spy them out
And after blazon them, but in fair faith
And plain sincerity with no double heart
To make confession sure, and give my life
A pledge into your hands. Stand not amaz'd,
As if it were a thing impossible
That CHRIST's disciple should not be his friend.
Mine hath been toilsome husbandry, my lords,
And none but bitter fruits have I reap'd from it,
Fruits of repentance: Weary days and nights
I've minister'd to him without reward,
And weary miles full many travel'd o'er,
Fainting and pinch'd with hunger; then at night,
When the wild creatures of the earth find rest
And covert in their holes, houseless have watch'd
Amidst the shock of elements, and brav'd
Storms, which the mail'd rhinoceros did not dare
Unshelter'd to abide: Sometimes on sea
Lash'd by the surging waves I've toil'd for life,

Whilst

Whilst he sate sleeping, reckless of the gale:
Rescu'd from these, for I of force confess
His pow'r is absolute, and safe on shore,
My labors ceas'd not with the scene; new toils,
New tasks succeeded: Now to rocks and caves,
To sandy wilds, or wheresoever else
The Spirit led and desolation reign'd,
His wand'ring steps I follow'd, yes, his steps,
But at what distance from his heart he held me,
Bear witness, mem'ry! Others had his heart,
Peter and James and John, to them he breath'd
The secrets of his soul, on them he shower'd
His promises; of these he made no thrift,
These he abounded in; to me he gave
What he had least in store, a barren purse,
And bade me bear it; no hard task I own,
For it was light as beggary could make it,
But office most ignoble. Here perchance
Your wisdom would demand of me a cause,

Why

Why I endur'd these slights year after year,
And still toil'd on in such a thankless service;
What fascination and what spell, you'll ask,
Doth this man work with, so to charm the mind
And lure it on through mortifying toils,
Sorrows and pains, and, worse than these, contempts,
Yet hold it still enchain'd slave to his will?
Most equal judges, I must here submit
My weakness to your censure, and refer
My cause to mercy, or in self-defence
Conjure you for a moment to descend
From your high state, and to my humble place
And peasant thoughts accord your own great minds:
My lords, I neither mean to varnish o'er
My own too feeble nature, nor to smooth
The rough sincerity of truth through fear
Or flattery of those, 'fore whom I speak:
If JESUS works by spells, I know them not;
Pray'rs but not incantations I have heard;

If these be charms, they are no charms for devils,
Yet such he's charg'd withal: Neither by league
With Beelzebub, as some have gravely urg'd,
Nor art Samaritan, nor else by imp
Or genius, as the heathen loudly vouch
Of their fam'd Socrates, do I believe
His miracles are wrought: Alas, alas!
Which of hell's ministers will be suborn'd
To work his own confusion? No, they shriek,
They tremble, at his bidding they come forth
From men possest, they vanish to the winds,
They sink into the pit from whence they sprung.
I am a man, my lords, not over-prone
To rash credulity, nor apt to veer
With ev'ry breath of doctrine, and I've heard
A voice, that sways the elements, commands
The springs of health, making maim'd nature whole,
Nay, life itself return into the trunk
Which it had left, and give a second pulse

To

To the cold heart of death: This to have seen,
And not to stand in reverence of the pow'r
That wrought these miracles, were a degree
Of apathy above my nature's reach.
No more! cried CAIAPHAS, no more of this!
You much abuse our patience with this talk.
Here is no place to sound CHRIST's praises forth;
We are not met to recognize his pow'r
And back his daring claims, but to chastise
Imposture, to assert our sacred law,
And vindicate the majesty of Heav'n.
You tell us you are wearied with the tasks
Of a hard Master; quit him then and earn
A better service, earn a rich reward
By yielding him to justice. You well know
His haunts, his privacies, his darkling hours,
When without hazard of a public brawl
We may make lawful seizure for the state
Of his attainted person: On this point,

So you will order your discourse aright,
You may speak freely; of his praise no more.
To him th' Apostate: If from my forc'd lips,
Unwilling witnesses although they be,
Truth wrings this praise, the last which they will utter,
Suffer thus far in candor, and let pass
These words in justice to a Master's fame,
Whom I renounce and with an oath devote
To wrath, to punishment, to death itself,
If death you doom. But oh! most reverend lords,
It is not as a false and juggling cheat,
A dealer with familiars I present him
To your just judgment: Wretches vile as these
Would but disgrace your wrath and my revenge.
But take him as a victim from my hands
Richer than hecatombs of vulgar blood,
A sacrifice for God's high priest to make,
Whilst all earth's scepter'd monarchs stood around
To gaze upon the work. Be not deceiv'd:

I know

I know the jeopardy in which I stand,
Yet I will on; in me is no delay:
This night, this hour, this instant I am your's
To trace him to his haunts, to be your guide
And marshal you to vengeance. But beware!
Let them be chosen men you send, approv'd [fire,
And constant, though the heav'ns shall rain down
And the earth rock beneath them: He, who call'd
The dead anatomy to life, can well
Make corpses of the living.—Here the voice
Of one, who nearest to the throne had place,
Cut short the traitor's speech: Of high renown
Was he now rising, NICODEMUS, known
To after-ages as the nightly guest
Of JESUS, and his converse with our Lord
In holy writ recorded: Grave he was,
A Pharisee and ruler of the Jews,
Yet not of soul vindictive like the rest,
Nor aspect arrogant; when thus he spake.

I call

I call the time mispent, that is bestow'd
On loud-tongu'd orators, whose art it is
To launch their hearers upon passion's tide,
And drive them on by gusts of windy words
A giddy desperate course to rocks and shoals,
Which steer'd by sage experience they had shunn'd.
Such shipwreck of our wisdom we might make,
Should we our better senses now permit
To take improv'ident counsel of our ears,
By this high-ton'd declaimer thus assail'd.
I pray you, therefore, carry back your thoughts
To times foregone, when prophets have arose
And boasted mighty works, which, being done
Of man's device and cunning, came to nought:
So will it be with JESUS, if his spirit
Be not of God: time will o'ertake deceit,
If time be let to run; but cut it short
By death's rash stroke, you cover him with glory,
And from his ashes raise a mightier name,

Than

Than living he had reach'd with all the aids
Of artifice to back him. Give me, Heav'n!
That tolerating policy, which shews
No bitterness in speculative points:
Disdaining from my heart what this man says,
A traitor says, who comes to sell his Master,
My sentence never shall affect the life
Of this or any other man accus'd
On vague presumptions, nor will I say, Die!
Till I have that in proof, which merits death:
For if this JESUS vaunts himself to be
What he is not, God will confute his pride;
But if with pow'r divine he acts and speaks,
Commission'd to some awful unseen end,
Shall man contend with God? Vain strife! shall we
Fall off from our great origin, the faith
Of our blest father Abraham? Shall we,
Sore smitten for our trespasses, cut short
And wasted to a remnant, we, on whom

The

The guiltless blood of all the prophets rests,
Send this man up to heav'n to cry against us,
And to a burthen heavier than enough
Add more and weightier guilt than all the rest?
Heav'n's grace forefend! You have my conscience,
I leave it to your thoughts: I stand absolv'd. [lords;
He said, and conscious that his words were lost
Upon obdurate hearts, departed thence,
So warn'd of God, and from the gulph escap'd
Of that night's dire perdition, wherein all
Save him alone were lost. So in the wreck
Of some great admiral, full fraught for war,
When his tall vessel splits, and the bold crew
Plunge quick into th' abyss, Heav'n sometimes
By wond'rous providence to snatch one life [deigns
From the devouring waves, and waft him home
A solitary relick, there to tell
God's mercies and his sad companions' fate.
Him thus departing the proud pontiff ey'd

With

With look malign, and to these taunts gave vent.

Weak is that cause, whose advocate flies from it:
I pause to see if any here will follow.
None moves, none speaks, none seconds his appeal:
'Tis well! One only convert to our foe,
One patron of his cause this senate held,
And holds no longer: Vanish'd, flown, escap'd!
One heart, one mind, one voice now rules the whole.
For me, I nor opinion shift nor place,
Faithful I shrink from neither. You have heard
What this wise elder counsels; he hath left
His conscience as a legacy behind him:
Let him, who loves the giver, take the gift;
I, for such part as to my share may fall,
Scorn to engraft that scyon on my heart,
Which, if admitted, might impart the seeds
Of treason and apostacy like his.
Till cold and hot agree, till selfish fear
And temporising maxims coalesce

With

With patriot zeal for Israel and firm faith
In God's reveal'd decrees, his thoughts and mine
Will never mix, and the attempt to join
Their jarring elements could only serve
To make this breast a field of mental war.
Mark, brethren, mark how this man contravenes
Your antient just retaliating law.
Moses said—Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth!
So is revenge a virtue: By this rule
Jesus must die; for who puts out the law,
Puts out the light of Israel, stabs the life,
And life for life is justice upon record.
This ordinance our absent elder spurns;
He holds at nought our antient equity,
And sets new doctrines forth; tells us forsooth,
That we must wait the time, wait till the light
Of Israel be extinct, and leave redress
For those, who without eyes can spy it out;
Such councils would make cowards of us all,
Rebels

Rebels to God, deserters from the faith,
Traitors to Israel. Can I wear these robes,
And wear a heart within so vile, so base?
Tear them away, uncover me to shame,
Make me the scorn of men, if, thus array'd
And trickt in outside honors, I am found
False to that King, whose standard I support.
No, venerable sages, if your rule
Were short to teach us what our duty is,
The very heathen would inform us of it:
The Roman soldier, who deserts his post,
Or sleeping suffers a surprise, shall die;
But we, with God's own armies in our charge,
We, whose commander is the Lord of Hosts,
Should we be found thus criminal, what death,
What doom, more terrible than death itself,
Can recompense such treason? Forth then, lords!
Draw out an armed band and send them forth.
Behold a ready leader! Time yet serves;

This night no stir, no stragglers in our streets
To shake the city's peace: JESUS secur'd
And hither brought, a largess I decree
To all concern'd; to JUDAS a reward
Befitting us to give, him to receive.
No more: loud acclamations shook the hall:
Th' assembly rose, the traitor bow'd assent,
A band of ruffians arm'd with swords and staves
Forth issued with ISCARIOT at their head,
And to the Olive Mountain bent their course.
Oh, hour accurst! Oh, all ye stars of heav'n!
And thou pale waining moon, etherial lights,
First-born of Nature, look not, ye chaste fires,
Upon this monster-breeding earth, but quench
Your conscious lamps and whelm this murd'rous
In darkness black as their own damning plot. [crew
And thou, conductor of this Stygian band,
Vile hypocrite, what fiend inspir'd the thought
To hail thy Master with the kiss of peace,

And

And so betray him? Wretch, the time will come,
When rack'd with horror, and to all hope lost,
Thine agonizing soul shall rue this deed,
Curse its birth-hour, and whilst thy Master soars
To heav'n, triumphant over death and sin,
Thou shalt sink howling to the depths of hell.

Now break your synod up, ye envious priests,
Elders and scribes! prepare your harden'd hearts
To judge the LORD of Life, convene your spies
To forge false witness, and make smooth the way
To man's redemption by the blood of CHRIST,
The very Paschal Lamb, whom by the type
Of this night's sacrifice ye shadow'd forth,
Blind unbelieving prophets as ye are.
Fit hour ye chose, ye murd'rers, to embrue
Your cursed hands in that pure Victim's blood,
Peace-offering for the sins of lost mankind.
Hence to your homes! there meditate new plots;
The fiends shall be your helpers, to your thoughts
Present,

Present, though not to sight, they swarm around,
Now here, now there, now hovering over head,
Where, as your enmity to CHRIST breaks forth,
And your blaspheming voices fill the roof,
Like steaming vapours from sulphureous lakes,
Joyous they catch the welcome sounds, and fan
With clapping wings the pestilential air,
Applauding as they soar. Now clear the hall;
Yield up your seats, ye substituted fiends;
Hence, minor dæmons! give your masters place!
And hark! the King of Terrors speaks the word,
He calls his shadowy princes, they start forth,
Expand themselves to sight and throng the hall,
A synod of infernals: Forms more dire
Imagination shapes not, when the wretch,
Whom conscience haunts, in the dead hour of night,
Whilst all is dark and silent round his bed,
Sees hideous phantoms in his fev'rish dream,
That stare him into madness with fix'd eyes
And

And threat'ning faces floating in his brain.
The ghostly monarch mounts the vacant throne;
Gives sign for order, the superiors sit,
Each as his stellar attribute gives rank
And place peculiar, the untitled stand
Circling their LUCIFER, their fallen sun:
He of his state more jealous, as in heart
Conscious of faded glory, in the midst
Now rising, after many a hard essay
To wreathe his war-worn face into a smile,
Semblance at least of joy, at length with voice
Screw'd to the pitch of triumph vaunting cries.

Pow'rs and Dominions, Lords by victory's right
Of earth and man, now from his Maker won
By overthrow of Heav'n's last champion giv'n
In God's own city, battle fairly gain'd
On hostile ground, his Sion's sacred mount, [friends;
Warriors, your king applauds you: Thanks, brave
Now shall your temples with loud pæans ring,

Your

Your vindicated altars and your groves
Exhale rich clouds of incense, steaming forth
From od'rous gums; your statues gaily crown'd
With garlands, every trophy, that the art
Of painting or of sculpture can bestow,
Shall be hung round to decorate your shrines;
Your oracles henceforth shall find a voice,
Which future Christs shall never put to silence,
And nations from your lips shall ask their fate:
This day to all posterity shall be
Sacred to games, processions, triumphs, feasts,
And laurel-crowned bards shall hymn your praise.
But sure no spirit of etherial mould,
For such of right ye are, will so forget
His native dignity as to repine,
Or gloat with envy, if I now demand
Your tribute of especial praise to him,
Whom your joint suffrages deputed first
To this important embassy; a spirit

Our

Our subterranean empire cannot mate
For high authority and potent sway
O'er man's subjected heart: MAMMON, stand forth!
Stand forth, thou prosp'rous, rich, persuasive pow'r,
Worshipp'd of all, great idol of the world;
May fortune on thy patient labors smile,
Thou persevering deity! Pursue
Thy darling metal through earth's central veins,
Ransack her womb for mines, send forth thy slaves
To undiscover'd realms, and bid them sap
Potosi's glittering mountains for their ore;
Pull down her golden temples, strip her kings,
Rack them with tortures, wring their secrets out
By slow-consuming fires, lay Nature waste,
Let nothing mortal breathe upon the soil
That covers gold: All hell applauds thy zeal,
And all hell's engines shall assist thy search.
He said, and lo! from either side the throne
Upon the signal a seraphic choir

In equal bands came forth ; the minstrels strike
Their golden harps ; swift o'er the sounding strings
Their flying fingers sweep, whilst to the strain
Melodious voices, though to heav'nly airs
Attun'd no longer, still in sweet accord
Echo the festive song, now full combin'd
Pouring the choral torrent on the ear,
In parts responsive now warbling by turns
Their sprightly quick divisions, swelling now
Through all the compass of their tuneful throats
Their varying cadences, as fancy prompts.
Whereat the Stygian herd, like them of old
Lull'd by the Theban minstrel, stood at gaze
Mute and appeas'd, for music hath a voice,
Which ev'n the devils obey, and for a while
Sweet sounds shall lay their turbid hearts asleep,
Charm'd into sweet oblivion and repose.
The praise of MAMMON the rapt seraphs sung
And gold's almighty pow'r ; free flow'd the verse ;

No

No need to call the Muse, for all were there,
Apollo and the Heliconian maids,
And all that pagan poet e'er invok'd
Were present to the song. Above the flight
Of bold Alcæus, Tisias bard divine,
Or Pindar's strain Olympic, high it soar'd
In dithyrambic majesty sublime.
At the right hand of hell's terrific Lord
MAMMON exalted sate, and as the choir
Chanted their hymn, his swelling bosom throbb'd
In concert with the strain; pride flush'd his cheek
Furrow'd with care and toil, his eyes, now rais'd
From earth, their proper centre, sparkling gleam'd
Malicious triumph, whilst ovations loud
And thund'ring plaudits shook the trembling roof.
The song was clos'd, and, order now resum'd,
MAMMON stood forth to speak; when ere the words
From his slow lips found way, the infernal King,
With eager action starting from his throne,

Gave sign for silence and thus interpos'd.

Pause, worthy spi'rit, awhile ! my mind forebodes
Cares more immediate, for amid the throng
I spy our faithful Chemos ; well I know
'Tis not on slight occasion he hath left
The post assign'd him ; and behold ! his looks
Augur important tidings. Fall back, friends,
And give our gallant centinel access.

Obedient to the word the opening files
Fell back and let him pass ; he to the throne
Low rev'rence made, and thus his chief address'd.

Imperial Lord of this seraphic host,
As I kept station on the faithless mount,
Where once my altar blaz'd, revolted now
From its allegiance and with olive crown'd
In token of God's peace, I thence descried
By glimpse of the pale moon a vagrant train,
With Jesus at their head, fording the brook,
As thither bound: I couch'd upon the watch,

So

So bidd'n, and to their talk gave heedful ear.
A melancholy theme the Master chose:
Sadly he warns them of his own death's hour
Now near impending, and how all shall fly,
Like scatter'd sheep, and their lone Shepherd leave
Forlorn, abandon'd: This the fiery zeal
Of PETER, to our Chief well known, disclaims,
Who boldly vouches, though all else should swerve,
His own unshaken constancy; when CHRIST,
Severe though not with railing, him reproves,
And solemnly denounces triple breach
Of this vain boast, and instant, for this night,
Or e'er the cock's shrill trumpet twice shall sound,
So CHRIST predicts, he shall be thrice denied
Of this self-vaunting man: All this I heard,
And held it for my duty to report;
What more ensu'd imperfectly I learn;
For now the Master taketh three apart,
And much disturb'd in soul and sore amaz'd

Wills them stand off and watch, whilst he retires
And vents his grief in pray'r: I saw him fall
Prostrate to earth, and vent such heart-felt groans,
That were I other than I am, less wrong'd,
Less hostile to the tyranny of Heav'n,
Whence I am exil'd, I had then let fall
Weak pity's tear and been my nature's fool.
But, lords, I cannot so forget your cause,
Or my own wrongs, nor would I wear a heart
Made of such melting stuff. With noiseless tread
The kneeling Suppliant I approach'd, and mark'd
His agony of soul, whilst from his brow
I saw large drops and gouttes of bloody sweat
Incarnardine the dust, on which they fell.
Bear witness, my revenge, 'twas there, ev'n there,
The very spot, on which he knelt and pray'd,
Where now his blood, wrung out by agony
As in atonement, dropt, on which my shrine,
Rear'd by the wives of the uxorious king,

Deck'd

Deck'd out with blazing tapers proudly shone,
And front to front of God's own temple stood,
Till Asa's parricidal hand pluck'd up
Maacha's grove, and burnt my shrine to dust.
Now hear the sequel: As I stood at gaze,
Noting his pray'r, one of the heav'nly band
And of the highest, GABRIEL, with his spear
Couch'd as for combat, started forth to view,
And frowning bade me take my flight with speed,
Nor trouble that just person: Valiant peers!
I am not one to back at his proud bidding,
Nor ever did I turn my face to flight
Save in our army's universal rout,
When all from heav'n fell headlong to the gulph:
Such weapon as I had, this trenchant sword
Of adamantine proof, forthwith I drew;
But ere my arm could wield it, swift as thought
I felt his spear's sharp point with forceful thrust
Deep plung'd into my side: Staggering, amaz'd,
I gave

I gave back so compell'd; he still advanc'd
Arm'd for a second onset, when my strength
Foil'd, though immortal, and my sight grown dim,
My wound the whilst sore rankling, I took wing
And hither came on painful pinions borne,
Your faithful servant, whether to attempt
Fresh battle, or my present loss repair.

This said, he put his azure tunic by,
And bar'd his wounded side, where GABRIEL'S spear
Had lodg'd its massy fluke, a ghastly chasm
Trench'd by the force of arch-angelic arm,
And to aught else than deathless spirit, death.

Fir'd at the sight with eyes that sparkling blaz'd
SATAN uprose, and thus infuriate spake.

GABRIEL in arms! Hah! warriors, we are brav'd:
CHRIST hath his guard about him and defies us.
If this immortal spirit could not stand,
What shall ISCARIOT do? Myself will forth;
We shall then see who wields the stronger lance,

SATAN

SATAN OR GABRIEL: In the fields of heaven,
In the mid-air, on earth, in deepest hell,
He knows my might superior, and shall rue
His dastardly assault. Why not with me,
The sender rather than the sent, this strife?
So might he boast the contest, though subdued.
The scars by this sharp sword in battle dealt
Are the best honors GABRIEL hath to vaunt;
The brightest laurels on his brow are those
I planted when in equal fight I deign'd
To measure spears with such inferior foe.
Doth GABRIEL think God's favour can reverse
Immutable pre-eminence, and raise
His menial sphere to that, in which I shone
Son of the morning? Doth he vainly hope
Exil'd from heav'n we left our courage there,
Or lost it in our fall, or that hell's fires
Have parch'd and wither'd our shrunk sinews up?
Delusive hope! the warrior's nerve is strung
By

By exercise, by pain, by glorious toil:
The torrid clime of hell, its burning rock,
Its gulph of liquid flames, in which we roll'd, [fires
Have calcin'd our strong hearts, breath'd their own
Into our veins, and forg'd those nerves to steel,
Which heav'n's calm æther, her voluptuous skies
And frequent adorations well nigh smooth'd
To the soft flexibility of slaves,
Till bold rebellion shook its fetters off,
And with their clangor rais'd so brave a storm,
That God's eternal throne rock'd to its base.
Now break we up this council: Each disperse
Or to his post, his pleasure or pursuit;
Sufficeth for this task my single arm:
CHEMOS shall be reveng'd; the public zeal
Of MAMMON still shall be our theme of praise;
Nor shall ISCARIOT'S nightly plot be foil'd
By intervening angels, nor these priests,
Whose seats we fill and whose allies we are,

Fail

Fail of their victim, or find us remiss
To second them in this our common league
And joint emprise against the pow'rs of Heav'n.
'Twas said, the princes of th' assembly rose
In reverence to his will; the legion round
Smote on their shields the signal of assent.
Tow'ring he stood, the Majesty of Hell,
Dark o'er his brows thick clouds of vengeance roll'd,
Thunder was in his voice, his eye shot fire,
And loud he call'd for buckler and for spear;
These bold AZAZEL bore, enormous weight,
For Atlantean spirit proper charge:
With eager grasp he seiz'd the towering mast,
And shook it like a twig; then with a frown,
That aw'd the stoutest heart, gave sign for all
Straight to disperse, and vanish'd from their sight.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

CALVARY;

OR,

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT.

A general review of CHRIST's agony in the garden:....His disciples, who are ordered to watch, fall asleep; CHRIST prays apart; he awakens them, and warns them to watch lest they enter into temptation.....SATAN arrives, and takes post near the spot where CHRIST is praying in his agony:....He is discovered by GABRIEL, the supporting angel; their interview described:....CHRIST approaches, and reproving SATAN, by the word of power casts him to the ground disabled and in torments.....JUDAS now advances with an armed company; betrays his Master with a kiss:....CHRIST is seized, and carried away to the palace of the high priest.....SATAN, unable to rise, laments over his disconsolate condition:....He is discovered by MAMMON, who consoles him, and assists in raising him from the ground:....SATAN testifies to the power and divinity of CHRIST, feels a presentiment of his impending doom, and having delivered his last injunctions to MAMMON, is lifted from the earth by a stormy gust and carried through the air out of sight of that evil spirit, who, terrified by the fate of his chief, turns to flight and escapes.

CALVARY.

BOOK IV.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

O MOUNT of agony! water'd with tears
From my Redeemer's eyes, and by his knees,
Pressing thy turf, made sacred as the ground,
Where ev'n the chosen Shepherd might not stand
But with unsandal'd feet, Ah! where is now
That purifying Angel me to cleanse
From this vile world, that so I may approach,
Though but in thought, with a right spi'rit renew'd,
Thy hallow'd solitude? Lo! where the Lord
Sorrowing retires apart: Where are the three
Station'd to guard his sacred privacy?
Stand they aloof, as their forefathers stood,

When

When from the midst of darkness, cloud and fire,
Jehovah thunder'd out of Sinaï's mount?
Ah, no! within that olive grove they lie
Stretch'd on the ground, a drowsy slumb'ring guard.
And could ye not, ye sleepers, watch one hour
For such a Master? Oh! what heart could taste
Of rest or peace, whilst his was rack'd with pain?
Was it the sighs his suffering virtue breath'd
Into the air of sad Gethsemanè,
That so entranc'd your senses? Or was he,
The strength'ning Angel, sent from heav'n to shield
The Savior's anguish from all human eyes,
And veil the mystery of that awful hour?
Then was that angry cup, full mix'd and red
From God's right hand, presented to his lips:
The bitter essence of origi'nal sin,
With every life-destroying extract, drawn
From man's corruption since, were there infus'd,
Compounded and resolv'd into that draught,

Mix'd

Mix'd by the hand of Death and drugg'd in hell.
The coward, shrinking under fortune's blows,
With desperate lip hath oft-times drank and died;
'Tis refuge, 'tis desertion from a post
He dare defend no longer, 'tis the hope,
False fruitless hope, of a perpetual sleep,
When he hath bottom'd that Lethæan cup:
But our Redeemer's potion was not such;
Horrors and heart-dissolving woes and pangs,
That mock imagination's scope, and stretch
The heart's strong cordage, till it bursts asunder
And leaves the mind a wreck, these were the drugs,
That brew'd that cup of agony, which God
Now tender'd as the wrath-atoning draught
For a revolted world! Mysterious act!
The Father sacrifice the Son be ov'd!
The just to spare the unjust lay the rod
Upon the guiltless head! Shall all offend,
And One atone for all? One Victim bear

The accumulated load of punishment,
The mass of vengeance, that amazing whole,
Which each particu'lar sin had pil'd in store,
And that devoted sacrifice a Lamb
Pure, without spot or blemish? O my soul!
Beware, nor to that tabernacle press,
Where clouds and darkness canopy thy God.
Lo! where the Savior kneels; he looks around
For some to succour, to support, some friend,
Whose sympathising eye might beam upon him,
And with a moment's glance of pity chear
His desolated spirit. All around
Is vacant horror, solitary, dark;
The partners of his heart, the chosen few, [sleep,
The friends, who should have watch'd, are wrapt in
Insensible, supine, oblivious sleep;
Woes multiplied by woe, and that the worst,
Ingratitude, the sharpest fang that gnaws
Man's bleeding bosom. In this sad extreme,

His

His soul revolting from the noisome draught,
With eyes to Heav'n uplifted, and a sigh,
Which shew'd that human weakness then o'er-
His soul's diviner part—Abba! he cries, [power'd
Father, all things are possible to Thee,
Remove this cup!—Then bows his patient head
And qualifies the pray'r—Yet not my will,
But Thine be done!—No voice from Heav'n replies:
All nature sleeps in silence still as death,
As if the planets in their spheres had paus'd
To watch the trembling balance, on whose point
The fortunes of this globe suspended hung,
Its ruin or redemption, death or life.

'Twas then the strength'ning Angel dealt the blow,
That put the hovering spy of hell to flight,
Seen of our LORD in ambush where he lay.
And now the Mourner rises from the earth,
On which he knelt, and a few paces moves
Pensive and slow to find his station'd friends;

He finds them not as friends upon the watch,
Not as God's faithful soldiers should be found,
But at their length stretch'd out in lazy sleep
With folded arms supine. Rous'd by his voice
They stare, they start confounded and amaz'd.
Could ye not watch one hour? the Sufferer cries:
Watch, for the foe of man is near at hand;
Pray, lest ye fall into the Tempter's snare:
The spi'rit is ready, but the flesh is weak.
So warn'd, he leaves them with this mild rebuke:
A second time he seeks the dismal dell,
Again he prays remission of his woe,
And deprecates the agonizing cup:
Meanwhile his drowsy centinels perceive
A languor, which their senses must obey,
And down they sink, their leaden eye-balls clos'd
As in a death-like trance. Again he comes,
Again he calls, a second warning gives,
And so departs.—Now SATAN on the wing

Swift as a fiery meteor rides the air,
With shield and spear arm'd at all points for war:
Then down at once with huge Titanian bulk,
Plumb down he lights upon the solid soil,
Hard by th' angelic post: Earth felt the shock,
And trembling to her center inly groan'd.
Nor did his haughty courage deign to crouch,
Or lurk with lion watch, but firm of foot
Erect and confident in arms he stood,
As one, whose prowess all advantage scorn'd
And mean surprize of an unguarded foe:
Such arts to weaker spirits he resign'd:
He of his former self felt no decay,
Or feeling scorn'd confession, for his pride
Still deem'd that heav'n, though lost, contain'd no peer
To mate with him in hardihood and proof,
Save only the Almighty; to such height
Of arrogance had pow'r long time usurp'd
Over the Gentile nations, and the sight
Of

Of God's own Son, now, as he falsely deem'd,
Vanquish'd and prostrate, swell'd his impious heart.
Our blessed LORD meanwhile having preferr'd
For the last time his interceding prayer,
Summon'd his strength, and conscious that the hour
Was come, which finish'd or revok'd the task
Of man's redemption from the powers of hell,
Whose representative hard by at hand
Stood eager to arrest the forfeit prize,
Put forth his hand, and as he took the cup,
SATAN, who stood spectator of the deed,
Started aghast; cold tremor shook his joints,
His threat'ning spear now droop'd, and his broad shield,
So proudly borne aloft, weigh'd down his arm
Slack and unnerv'd; confusion seiz'd his heart,
And his high courage quail'd. This GABRIEL saw,
Yet left he not his post till CHRIST had drain'd
The cup mysterious; to its lowest dregs
He drank it; now convulsion shook the fiend,

Death shriek'd amain and through his hollow ribs
Drove his own ebon dart with desp'rate rage.
Bitter the draught and hateful to the taste,
But Immortality had crown'd the cup,
And Light and Life on phœnix wings sprung forth
From the foul dregs in new-born glories bright. 151

GABRIEL, who knew that by this solemn act
Thus happily perform'd his charge expir'd,
Now turn'd away in search of that fierce spi'rit,
Whom through the darkling covert he had seen,
Whilst by the side of God's afflicted Son 156
Minist'ring he stood: Right well he knew the form
And towering port of hell's terrific King;
Nor had the dire confusion and dismay
Of that fell dæmon scap'd th' angelic glance. 160
Him now within a gloomy dell retir'd
To further distance, wrapt as it should seem
In pensive thought, the Guardian Seraph spy'd.
In the same moment SATAN'S ghastly eye

Glanc'd

Glanc'd on his foe : bright in cærulean arms
Heav'n's champion shone, high o'er his crested helm
The arch-angelic plume triformed wav'd,
Ensign of throned state and high command.
The grisly monarch gnash'd his teeth with spite
To find himself encounter'd at such odds ;
His foe fresh blooming in immortal youth,
Vigorous, in heav'nly-temper'd armor brac'd ;
Himself at this ill hour surpriz'd, his strength
As by enchantment blasted, and that voice,
Which in the ears of all hell's princes vouch'd
Such bold atchievements, shrunk from its high pitch
To feeble murmurs and weak whining sighs.

So when on Zama's plain the rival chiefs,
Rome's consul and the Punic captain, met
To parley in mid-way 'twixt either camp,
The war-worn veteran, blighted and defac'd
By wint'ry marches over noisome fens
And snows on mountains pil'd, with envious eye,
Sole

Sole relick of his toil, survey'd the form
And blooming features of his youthful foe;
Then to his mind recalling glories past,
When his proud menace aw'd immortal Rome,
Sigh'd to reflect how far in the decline
From that bright morn his evening sun had sunk;
Then ey'd the youth again, and in his face,
Shadow'd by fate, saw Carthage doom'd to fall,
And his own glories to a foe transferr'd
Less than his equal once, his conqu'ror now.
But 'twas not long that SATAN so endur'd,
For now the conscious sense of former deeds
Bold, though unblest, and high innate disdain
Of mean capitulation and demur
Rous'd his proud heart, like a hot courser spurr'd,
To chafe and lash his languid courage up:
Red'ning he swell'd and gnaw'd his nether lip
For vengeance that it would not give him words
To hurl defiance on th' advancing foe:

When

When GABRIEL, noting his disorder'd mien
And haggard aspect, straight bespoke the fiend.

Thus ever may the foe of CHRIST be found
Speechless, abash'd, struck down of Heav'n and quell'd!
How long, malicious Spi'rit, wilt thou persist
To trouble this vex'd earth? How long to haunt
This righteous person, whose strong virtue mocks
Thy faint attempts? Warn'd by this shame, avaunt!
Hence, baffled Tempter! roaming thus at large,
Thou dost but shew by melancholy proof,
That a tormented conscience never rests.

As the fierce panther, through the ribs transfix'd,
Writhes round the bloody weapon in his side,
And tugs it to and fro with foamy teeth,
Mad'ning with pain and gnashing at his wound;
So 'gainst himself and foe alike enrag'd,
Hell's gloomy Lord, by this deserved taunt
Cut to the heart, with many a hard essay
Struggled for voice; at length collecting breath,

These

These words disdainful, though of their full tone
And energy abated, found their way.
Gabriel, the brave in danger earn renown;
True valor spares the weak, but thou, more wise
Than valiant, studiest well the safer hour,
When to come forth and wage inglorious war
'Gainst unprovided foes; if Chemos then,
Or some slight Cherub, cross thy wary path,
Woe to the straggler! if thy barbed spear
Can make safe tilt at his unweapon'd side.
But I, who day and night have pac'd this globe,
Found in all quarters, I, who never shun'd,
Rather have sought, thy walk, am left to roam
Free and of thee unquestion'd from the hour,
When on the confines of this new-made world
We parlied under Eden's shady fence,
To th' instant now, when faint and ill at ease,
Unwarlike Angel, thou hast found me here
Nerveless, and little more than match for thee.

To

To whom th' indignant Virtue thus reply'd:
If SATAN here is found in evil plight,
He's found of me unsought. Thine own dark wiles,
Degen'rate Spi'rit, and Heav'n's all-ruling hand
Have cast thee in my way. Must I turn off
From duty's road direct because forsooth
A wounded adder hisses in my path?
Why didst thou press into this place of prayer,
This hallow'd solitude, where CHRIST hath breath'd
A charm, that withers up thy blasted strength?
Could'st thou not learn, by late experience taught,
There is a sphere about the Son of God,
In which no spi'rit like thee accurst can draw
His breath blaspheming? At a word begone!
Though with my foot I could have spurn'd thee
I tread not on the fall'n; nor do I vaunt [hence,
Conquest of thee; that to a mightier arm,
Rebel to God, to God's own Son thou ow'st,
To CHRIST, not GABRIEL: Nor shalt thou alone

Stoop

Stoop to his name, but every idol god,
And ev'ry pow'r of darkness with their prince,
And Sin hell-born, and thy foul offspring Death.
Whereto, by these prophetic words appall'd,
SATAN with taunting argument replied.
Since this angelic form, from death exempt,
Sometimes shall yield to aches and transient pains
And natural ailments for a while endur'd,
What wonder, if etherial spi'rit like me,
Pent in this atmosphere and fain to breathe
The lazy fogs of this unwholesome earth,
Pine for his native clime? What, if he droop,
Worn out with care and toil? Wert thou as I
Driv'n to and fro, and by God's thunder hurl'd
From Heav'n's high ramparts, would that silken form
Abide the tossing on hell's fiery lake?
Hadst thou like me travers'd the vast profound
Of antient Night, and beat the weary wing
Through stormy Chaos, voyage rude as this

Would

Would ruffle those fine plumes. I've kept my course
Through hurricanes, the least of which let loose
On this firm globe would winnow it to dust,
Snap like a weaver's thread the mighty chain,
That links it to heav'n's adamantine floor,
And whirl it through the Infinite of Space.
And what hast thou, soft Cherub, done the whilst?
What are thy labors? What hast thou atchiev'd?
Heav'n knows no winter, there no tempests howl;
To breathe perpetual spring, to sleep supine
On flowery beds of amaranth and rose,
Voluptuous slavery, was GABRIEL's choice:
His bosom never drew th' indignant sigh,
That rent my heart, when call'd to morning hymn
I paid compulsive homage at God's throne,
Warbling feign'd hallelujahs to his praise.
Spirits of abject mould, and such art thou,
May call this easy service, for they love
Ignoble ease; to me the fulsome task

Was

Was bitterest slavery, and though I fell,
I fell opposing; exil'd both from heav'n
Freedom and I shar'd the same glorious fall.
Go back then to thy drudgery of praise,
Practise new canticles and tune thy throat
To flattery's fawning pitch; leave me my groans,
Leave me to teach these echoes how to curse;
Here let me lie and make this rugged stone
My couch, my canopy this stormy cloud,
That rolls stern winter o'er my fenceless head;
'Tis freedom's privilege, nor tribute owes,
Nor tribute pays to Heav'n's despotic King.
Thus whilst he spake, the Savior of mankind,
New ris'n from pray'r, drew nigh; whereat the fiend,
Or e'er the awful presence met his eye,
Shivering, as one by sudden fever seiz'd,
Turn'd deadly pale; then fell to earth convuls'd.
Dire were the yells he vented, fierce the throes
That writh'd his tortur'd frame, whilst thro' the seams

And

And chinks, that in his jointed armour gap'd,
Blue sulph'rous flames in livid flashes burst,
So hot the hell within his fuel'd heart,
Which like a furnace sev'n times heated rag'd.
Meanwhile the winged Messenger of Heaven,
GABRIEL, with horror and amazement fix'd,
Stood motionless behind his orbed shield:
Not so the Savior; he with look compos'd
And stedfast noting the disastrous plight
Of that tormented fiend, these words address'd.

SATAN, thou see'st the serpent's primal curse
At length falls heavy on thy bruised head;
When man lost Paradise, by thee betray'd,
This was thy doom, Deceiver; and although
Ages have roll'd on ages since, yet God,
Who from eternal to eternal lives
Blessed for evermore, computes not time
As thou, whose mis'ry makes short years seem long.
Yet was the interim thine, and thou, who first

Brought'st

Brought'st sin into the world, hast reign'd in sin:
Thou hadst the power of death, but I through death
Am destin'd to destroy that power and thee.
And now my hour is come, I go to death,
That all through me may live; therefore begone! 340
Get thee behind me! Thou hast now no part
On earth, thy dwelling is prepar'd in hell:
There when we meet, expect to meet thy doom.
This said, the fiend replied not but with groans,
Nor staid the Angel longer than to turn 345
One last sad look upon his prostrate foe,
Then flew to heav'n. The Savior bent his steps
In search of his disciples; them he found
Wrapt as before in sleep.—Sleep on, he cried,
And henceforth take your rest: It is enough: 350
The hour is come. Behold! the Son of man
Into the hands of sinners is betray'd:
Rise, let us go! The traitor is at hand.
And lo! while yet he spake a mingled crew

Arm'd and unarm'd approach; before them all
JUDAS advancing thus bespeaks the throng:
Whom I shall kiss is he, the CHRIST: Him seize
And in safe keeping hold.—Upon the word
He gives the trait'rous greeting, and exclaims,
Hail, Master!—When at once the swarming crowd
Rush in a space, then stand in circle round,
Like blood-hounds held at bay, their eager eyes
Fix'd on his face, which to behold they rear
Their flaming torches, whilst the prospect round
Glares with the ruddy blaze; a ghastly troop,
Like that dread chorus, which the tragic bard
Pour'd on the scene, when the Athenian wives
Dropt their abortive burthens with affright,
To see their snaky locks and fiery brands
Kindled in Phlegethon's sulphureous waves:
So glares that haggard crew: in front they see
JESUS in conscious majesty unmov'd,
Behind him to some little space withdrawn

PETER

PETER and JAMES and JOHN, the chosen Three,
Small band, but in their Leader's power a host
Invincible, 'gainst whom whole armies leagu'd
Were but as chaff before the whirlwind's blast,
Had he so will'd; but now with accent firm,
Whom seek ye? he demands: They answer make,
JESUS of Nazareth.—I am the man,
JESUS replies; He, whom ye seek, is found.
His air, his utterance, and that voice divine,
Which could have arm'd Heav'n's legions in his cause,
Or gulph'd them to the center at a word,
Swift as the vollied thunder smote their hearts,
And hurld'd them to the ground: Headlong they fell
With hideous crash, nor ever thence had ris'n,
Had not his gracious purpose so decreed
For man's redemption: Up they rise from earth,
And in like manner to the same demand
A second time make answer; he repeats—
I told you, and ye heard, that I am He:

If therefore me ye seek, let these depart.
Then burst the chidden zeal of PETER forth,
Arm'd with a sword he rush'd upon the throng
And at the foremost aim'd a random blow,
That gash'd the caitiff's head, but miss'd the life.
Put up thy sword, rash man! the Savior cries,
Did I want rescue, would I ask of thee,
With all my Father's Angels at command?
No! let me do His will and drink His cup:
And you, that here encompass me about,
As 'twere a felon ye came out to take,
With swords and staves, suffer thus far, behold!
The wound his weapon makes my touch shall heal:
'Tis done! Know all, that they, who take the sword,
Shall perish by the sword. What needs this stir,
This midnight plotting and this traitor's kiss,
These staves, these torches and this arm'd array
To make one harmless peaceful man your prize?
You saw me daily in my public walks,

Freely

Freely we commun'd, for you harm'd me not;
You heard me in the temple; for I taught
In very zeal the simple way of truth,
Lab'ring full hard to turn your hearts to God: 415
If this were my offence, why not arrest
Your Preacher in the act, and drag to death
Him, who would fain have train'd you in the road
To life eternal? Never on the poor
Turn'd I my back; I courted not the rich; 420
Were this my fault, in the broad face of day
Ye might have smitten me and earn'd the praise
Of the proud Pharisee and braggart Scribe:
I fed the hungry and I heal'd your sick,
I succour'd the tormented and possest; 425
Are these the heinous acts for which I die?
In field, in city, in frequented ways,
The wretched flock'd around, if these be crimes,
Why is their punishment so long reserv'd
To this dark hour of night? The sun himself 430
Witness'd

Witness'd my doings, so might he my death.
But see! my followers are dispers'd and fled,
And I stand in your peril here alone:
No need to fear him, who makes no defence;
Conduct me to my doom: God's will be done!
  This said, their sacrilegious hands they laid
Upon his sacred person: He in' the midst
With meek composure and submitted look
March'd slowly onward, as they led the way
To the proud dome of CAIAPHAS, high-priest
Of MOLOCH than of God more fitly call'd.
  Oh! ye hard hearts, was this the Paschal Lamb,
Ye worse than pagan butchers, whom ye cull'd
Pure and unspotted for your bloody feast?
Well did your Lawgiver decree this day
A record and memorial to be kept
Throughout your generations to all time;
A memorable day, a noted feast
Your stubborn incredulity hath made it.

To you a day of darkness and disgrace ;
To us Salvation's glorious dawn, to us
By our great Captain led, the Lord of Life,
Who through the darksome avenue of death
And depths mysterious of the mazy grave,
Holding the clue of prophecy in hand,
Unravell'd all the ways of Providence
And to our view set ope the golden gates
Of Paradise regain'd, whence light and life
And bliss eternal beam on all mankind ;
For all, who with their lips confess the Lord,
And in their hearts believe that from the dead
God in his pow'r hath rais'd him, shall be sav'd.
Meanwhile the prince of hell, whom CHRIST had
Rolling in torments on the stony rock, [left
Mad as leviathan, when tempest-wreck'd
Flound'ring he lies upon the shoaly beach,
Now to one last and desperate effort driv'n,
Straining each nerve with many a dolorous groan
Half

Half his huge length had rear'd. His right hand
His spear, the other on his buckler propp'd [grasp'd
Pillow'd his head, raging with pain and thoughts
Black as the night around him: To arise
And stand surpass'd his power; in vain he spread
His feathery vans to raise him in the air;
About him all the ground with azure plumes
Beat from his shatter'd pinions was bestrewn:
Despair now seiz'd him, now too late he rued
His blasphemies and bold rebellious taunts
'Gainst Heav'n's Omnipotent, his Judge incens'd:
Hopeless of mercy now he curs'd his doom
Of immortality, and as he roll'd
His haggard eyes in night, hell's flaming gulph,
Terrific vision, seem'd to burst upon him
With treble horrors charg'd; then with a sigh,
That strain'd his heaving cors'let, he breath'd forth
In murmuring lamentations these sad words.
Ah! who will lift me from this iron bed,

On

On which Prometheus-like for ever link'd
And rivetted by dire necessity
I'm doom'd to lie, and wail the cruel boon
Of immortality, my baneful fate?
O earth, earth, earth! Cannot my groans pervade
Thy stony heart to' embowel me alive
Under this rock, before to-morrow's sun
Find me here weltering in the sordid dust,
A spectacle of scorn to all my host,
Wont to behold in me their kingly chief?
Will not some pitying earthquake gulph me down
To where the everlasting fountains sleep,
That in those wat'ry caverns I might slake
These fires, that shrivel my parch'd sinews up?
Ah! whither shall I turn? Who will unbrace
This scalding mail, that burns my tortur'd breast
Worse than the shirt of Nessus? Oh! for pity,
Grant me a moment's interval of ease,
Avenging, angry Deity! Draw back

Thy

Thy red right hand, that with the lightning arm'd
Thrust to my heart makes all my boiling blood
Hiss in my veins; or if thou wilt destroy
Whom thou hast vanquish'd, terminate these feuds
'Twixt good and evil, thee and me, reduce
This incorruptible to mould'ring dust,
Make Death a parricide, and so conclude
Me and my sufferings and my sins at once.
But 'twill not be. Happy I might have been,
Immortal I must be: God can create
Nothing but bliss; I made the pains I feel:
Sorrow had no existence, Death no name
Till I lost heav'n; to be was to be blest,
And beings blest could never cease to be.
This earth and man its habitant were good,
Till envy, pride, rebellion, in my heart
Engend'ring, marr'd God's perfect work with sin;
And but for sin the universe were heav'n:
So am I author of the hell within me,

And these tormenting fires God cannot quench ;
For that would be to turn from what he is,
Parent of good, and to become like me
Patron and friend of evil. Reas'ning thus
I must renounce all hope of future peace,
And wage eternal enmity with God,
Whom longer to oppose I now despair,
And under whose strong hand weigh'd down to earth
Prostrate, confounded, I can rise no more.
Must I be ever thus? Must these fierce pangs,
Or worse, if worse can be, torment me ever ?
Are there no means to make a truce with Heav'n ?
Submission, penitence, atonement, pray'rs
And intercessions—Oh! fallacious, vain,
Impracticable terms! Can pride shed tears,
Falsehood keep faith, or perjury pass its oath
Upon that Judge, to whom all hearts are known ?
It cannot be. Ages of sin have roll'd
'Twixt me and pardon, gulph impassable.

Man's

Man's loss of Paradise, a delug'd world,
Sin paramount on earth, the nations turn'd
From God to idols, scarce a remnant left
Of this his chosen race, corruption spread
Ev'n to' the heart of Judah', and from this Mount,
Sad witness of my overthrow and shame,
Scene of my triumphs once, his standard torn
And hell's proud banners flanting in its place;
These and a countless multitude of wrongs
Cry in the catalogue so loud against me,
That should the thunder of God's vengeance sleep,
Mercy herself would seize th' uplifted bolt
And speed the ling'ring blow. What is my hope,
If such the task to purchase peace for man,
Man so subordinate in sin to me,
The spring and fountain-head of that foul stream,
Which he at distance drank? If CHRIST must die
For man, if nothing less than God's own Son
Can stand betwixt the Father's wrath and man,

What

What mediator can be found for me?
None, and no wonder if his wrath, withdrawn
From man now pardon'd, fall with worse recoil
On my devoted head: Ev'n now it falls.
Me like an eagle in my tow'ring flight,
From the proud zenith of the sun's bright sphere
Headlong he hurls to earth with shatter'd wing
And plumes dishevell'd grov'ling in the dust:
Me, the sole mover of man's foul revolt,
He marks for tenfold vengeance; for if CHRIST,
The patient meek Redeemer, groans in pain,
What shall the Tempter feel? If on the rack
Of agony his guiltless brow sweats blood,
Well may this body' of sin burst out in flames,
A conflagration horrible to sight,
And blazing beacon to th' astonish'd world.
And what is this vile JUDAS, who seduc'd
By wily MAMMON sells his Master's life?
What PETER's self, whom, had not JESUS pray'd,
I'd

I'd sifted into chaff? These purblind priests,
Who with their half-shut eyes askance behold
Their own Messias in his wondrous acts,
Yet give those wonders to the powers of hell,
And trembling for their craft complot his death,
What are they? Whence but from myself their lyes?
'Tis I in them, and not they of themselves,
That kill the Prince of Peace; his guiltless blood
Sprinkles their hands, but in a flood-gate tide
Redder than scarlet whelms my sinking soul.

He ceas'd, and in his mantle hid his face
For shame and sorrow to be thus surpriz'd;
For MAMMON, ever on the foot by night,
Had spied him through the gloom, and thus began.

What ails thee, Prince of air, that here thou liest
On the dull earth, not resting it should seem
From victory, but vanquish'd and o'erthrown?

Vanquish'd, alas! and in the dust o'erthrown
By God's all-pow'rful Son, SATAN replied,

Too

Too sure I am; and how it wrings this heart
So to be found of thee words cannot speak.
Yet thou of all the spirits heav'n hath lost
Art he, of whom my pride hath least to fear;
For thou wilt not as others gall my spleen
With scorn and taunting: Thou, a friendly chief,
Hast pity for the sorrows of a friend;
To thee my valor and deserts are known,
For thou wert ever nearest where I fought
In front of danger on the battle's edge;
Thou know'st the hazard and the chance of war,
And with what malice fortune thwarts our best,
Our bravest efforts: Scarr'd thyself with wounds,
Thou from the wounded wilt not turn aside;
Therefore, O MAMMON, as my hand to thee
Were present, didst thou need it, so to me,
Thy sovereign in distress, reach forth thine hand,
And, if thou canst, upraise me from this fall;
If thou canst not, let not my armies know

Their

Their leader's fate, be mindful of my fame,
And bury this sad secret in thy breast.
He said, nor need had he of further suit,
For MAMMON now had put forth all his strength
To raise him from the ground; in his strong grasp
He seiz'd his giant limbs in armour clad
Of adamant and gold, a ponderous wreck:
Earth trembled with the shock; dire were the groans
Hell's Monarch vented, horrible the pains,
That rack'd his stiffen'd joints; yet on he toil'd
Till by Heav'n's sufferance rather than by aid
Of arm angelic once again he rear'd
His huge Titanian stature to the skies,
And stood; yet not as late with look erect
And lofty mien: Ruin was in his face;
Sordid and soil'd with ignominious dust
His robe imperial, and his azure wings
And glossy locks, that o'er his shoulders curl'd,
Dishevell'd now, and in like tatter'd trim

With

With vessel tempest-torn or by the force
Of engines weigh'd from bottom of the deep,
Founder'd in creek or harbor, where she lay
Gulph'd in the slimy ooze; when MAMMON thus:
Joy to our gallant Leader! Once again
With firm foot planted on the subject earth
We stand as spi'rits by our own strength redeem'd
Erect and dauntless. Wherefore droops that eye,
As it would root itself into the soil,
From which with vigor new restor'd you rise
Antæus-like indignant of defeat?
Oft, when in search of gold or silver ore
In earth's metallic veins, I've labor'd long
And hard, in damp and darksome caverns pent,
Mining the solid rock, at length to light
And the free air emerg'd, I've found my limbs
Stiffen'd with cramps, or with cold ague numb'd:
Yet never did my patient courage droop
Or slack its gainful toil. I am not apt,

When wealth or glory can be bought with pain,
To stagger at the terms; and if it please
Heav'n's Monarch in his vengeance to attach
To this eternal be'ing eternal pain,
Good hope, as poisons may be sheath'd by use,
So long familiarity with pain
May draw its sting, and habitude convert
Its hostile property to friendly ease.
But thy great heart perhaps is rent with grief,
Of pain disdainful as of lesser ill: [heaven,
And wherefore grieve? Our joys were lost with
Our passions all revers'd, our natures chang'd,
Virtues to vices, amity to hate;
Deeds, that in heav'n had been our shame, in hell
Become our glory'; and whilst the world endures,
Whilst evil is to good oppos'd, we keep
The fight at doubtful issue, oft-times win
The glorious field and triumph over God.
Why did I tempt ISCARIOT to betray

His

His guiltless Master? 'Twas not that I lov'd
The traitor, no, the treason was my joy;
I laugh at fools in their own folly caught:
The wretch I tempted, him I shall destroy,
And like a worn-out weapon cast him by;
He shall not live to see his Master's fall,
And for the sorry purchase of his sin
He shall but touch the adder's sting and die:
So much for JUDAS! Thus at once I slay
Two victims and refine upon revenge.
To whom with clouded brow and nothing cheer'd
By this discourse hell's gloomy Power replied:
MAMMON, you well describe the rueful change
Wrought in us by our overthrow from heav'n,
And for such solace as in thought you find
Pondering the sad eternity of pain,
My argument shall never be employ'd
To make that little less; but when you vaunt
ISCARIOT's treason and th' impending fall

Of that just Person, now before the bar
Of envious judges, who shall doom his death,
You vaunt a deed, which, though the' elect of hell
Jointly with me advis'd, brings on us all
Ruin with loss of empire, and all hope
So quenches, nought can stand us now in stead
But patience and your reconciling rules
To wont our natures to eternal pain.
My potency you know, and can you think
Less than the hand of God could hurl me down
To misery like this? It must be God,
Who speaks in CHRIST, the Father in the Son:
Though meek, Almighty he controuls the world
And me the world's late master; he destroys
Sin my begotten and Sin's offspring Death.
Oh! that I never had approach'd him more,
Foil'd in my first temptation. Now, ev'n now,
I feel a nature in me, not mine own,
That is my master and against my will

Enforces truths prophetic from my tongue,
Making me rev'rence whom in heart I hate:
I feel that now, though lifted from the ground,
I stand or move or speak but as he wills,
By influence not by freedom: I perceive
These exhalations, that the night breathes on me,
Are loaded with the vaporous steams of hell;
I scent them in the air, and well I know
The angel of destruction is abroad.
I cannot fly from fate; the man foredoom'd
To bruise my head is CHRIST, the time is come,
The prophecy is full; exil'd from hence,
As first from heav'n, my reign on earth is o'er,
And my last care is for those hapless friends,
The partners of my fall, when I am gone
Left like a headless trunk. Warn them to fly
Impending ruin; sure I am, when CHRIST
Breathes forth his sacred spi'rit into the air,
His dying gasp shall blow them like a spell

To

To the four winds of heav'n : Let them be gone
In time and ply the wing ; there's shelter yet
In this wide world for them : Though I must hence,
They may abide, and though their names be lost,
Their altars levell'd and their idols maim'd,
Yet shall their arts and offices endure,
Their influences still shall draw the hearts
Of many ; sin shall not at once secede
From earth, nor darkness wholly yield to light.
To thee, auspicious spi'rit, whose potent arm
Hath rais'd me from the ground, I can assure
A longer term of residence and power :
Thy empire in earth's inmost centre roots,
Thy influence circulates through all her veins ;
Nor earth alone, but ocean wafts to thee
Continual tribute ; commerce hails thy name ;
In thee war triumphs, thee fair peace adores
And gilds the feathers of her dove with gold
To dedicate to thee her worldly god,

Thee,

Thee, the last foe whom CHRIST shall chase rom
So spake the parting fiend in his last hour [earth.
Prophetic, father though he were of lyes:
To him the inferior dæmon answer none
Attempted, but in ghastly silence stood
Gazing with horror on his chieftain's face,
That chang'd all hues by fits, as when the North,
With nitrous vapours charg'd, convulsive shoots
Its fiery darts athwart the trembling pole,
Making heav'n's vault a canopy of blood;
So o'er the visage of the exorcis'd fiend
Alternate gleams like meteors came and went;
And ever and anon he beat his breast,
That quick and short with lab'ring pulses heav'd.
One piteous look he upward turn'd, one sigh
From his sad heart he fain had sent to heav'n,
But ere the hopeless messenger could leave
His quiv'ring lips, by sudden impulse seiz'd
He finds himself uplifted from the earth;

His

His azure wings, to sooty black now chang'd,
In wide expanse from either shoulder stretch
For flight involuntary: Up he springs
Whirl'd in a fiery vortex round and round;
As when the Lybian wilderness caught up
In sandy pillar by the eddying winds
Moves horrible, the grave of man and beast;
Him thus ascending the fork'd light'ning smites
With sidelong volley, whilst loud thunders rock
Heav'n's echoing vault, when all at once, behold!
Caught in the stream of an impetuous gust
High in mid-air, swift on the level wing
Northward he shoots and like a comet leaves
Long fiery track behind, speeding his course
Straight to the realms of Chaos and old Night,
Hell-bound and to Tartarean darkness doom'd.
His sad associate, left on earth, look'd up
And with like conscious terror ey'd his flight,
As when the merchant trembling for his freight

Looks

Looks seaward from some promontory's top,
And thence descries his gallant bark a wreck
Driving at mercy of the winds and waves
Full on the rocky shoal, her certain grave;
Then having bid farewell to all his hope
In this one bottom stor'd, now lost to sight,
Turns with a sigh aside, and o'er the strand
With heavy heart takes homeward his slow way.
So sigh'd the fiend, and for his own sad fate
Trembling yet fearful to attempt the wing,
Slunk cow'ring off veil'd in the shades of night.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

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